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CAT PEOPLE

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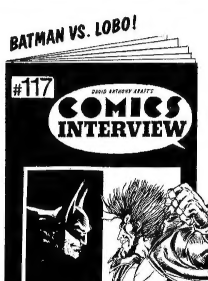

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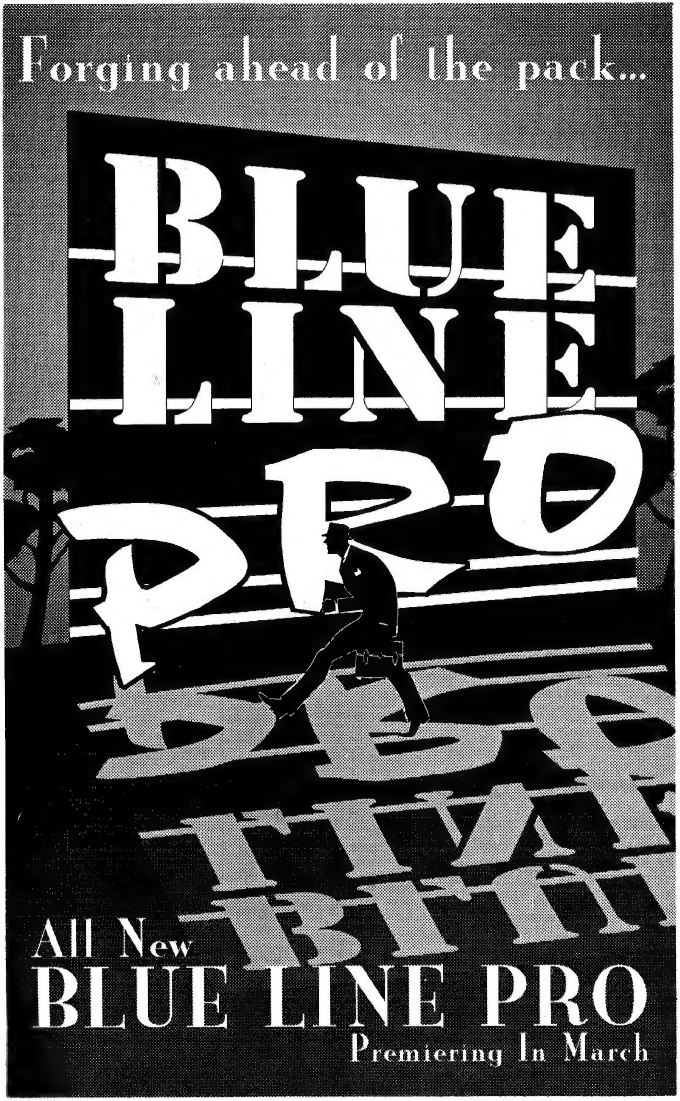
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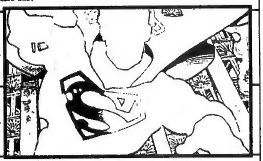

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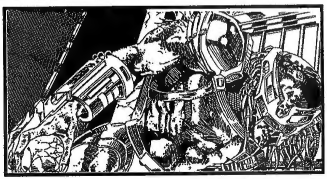

ABOUT THE COVER...

Lurene Haines renders an excellent painting for her upcoming Malibu project, *Cat People*!

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Editorial

Okay, so I've been lambasted. Lambasted, berated, tongue-lashed and chastised. And do you know why? Actually there are two reasons.

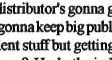
First and foremost, Timeliness! You've got to come out on time or you're killing yourself. Readers don't want to wait three months for the next issue that was suppose to be out two months ago and they won't. For this, I apologize (I feel like I've been saying I'm sorry a lot lately). I'll fill you in on a bit of background. We keep pretty busy here. We're a paper manufacturer. We're a publisher of a local newspaper, various other newsletters and sundry other books and we all work far more than a 40-hour week. As *Arena's* readership is increasing (and believe it or not, it is) we'll have more time to allot and more people to employ and *Arena* WILL be on time. Give us a couple months and everything will be on line, I promise.

Now, second, people want my editorials to be more thought-provoking, more, I don't know, spawnful to the applications of gray matter, I suppose. Let's see... what can I possibly say that would make each and every one of you reading this go, "Hmmm..." Most of the time I just bitch about readership and the industry or I try to instigate conflict by revealing the dastardly side of a professional's nature.

Okay, I've got something. In a recent *Diamond Dialogue* retailer's monthly (the January edition) there was a Publishers Outlook article with replies by Jim Shooter, Terry Stewart, Richard Pini, Paul Levitz, Dave Olbrich, Kevin Eastman and others (which could have included me, but didn't). One of the questions was, "What is the biggest challenge facing the comics industry today?"

I will reply.

The biggest challenge facing the industry today is the close-minded approach of supply and demand of comics by the marketeering triumvirate: the publishers, distributors and retailers. Too many consumer dollars are being spent on "hot" collectable items instead of on really good, quality comics books being produced, well, because the creators love doing their job and we should love reading them (the books, not the creators). And who's to blame for this? Most publishers aren't getting the needed exposure by the distributors and the retailers only order what they are certain will sell and the distributors orders are generated by the retailer so... well, it sounds like a never-ending circle. It's definitely a challenge. And who's hurting the most? The independent publisher, I would say. It's like this: the retailer's gonna go on retailing and the distributor's gonna go on distributing and the big publishers... they're gonna keep big publishing. But the little guys turning out really excellent stuff but getting low orders...? It's got to end somewhere - but where? Heck, the industry is doing just fine as it is, isn't it? I mean, that's what comics are - a collectable fanboy market - right? Think about it.



Joe Martin

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Thrown To The Lions!

CORRESPONDENCE & ADVICE

Hey, there! It's me again - The Editor. I didn't have enough room in the Editorial to voice everything I wanted to so, being The Editor, I can do things like this and begin talking anywhere in the book. Kind of an unfair set up, I know, but... uh, well, you know. I'm The Editor.

How do you like our new format? We've been bounding back and forth and forth and back and to and fro and so on with a lot of things design-wise but I think it's nailed down, hammered... uh, firm and unwavering. And the new logo? Excellent. That's here to stay. I hope. Even though I've got the power to do almost anything I want, The Publisher "usually" gets the final say. But, the logo was suggested by our "Creative Editor" out of our Ft. Walton Beach, Florida branch and if we went off changing it, people might lose jobs and - gulp - heads might roll. But, I like it (the logo, not the rolling heads thing). What do you think? WRITE.

Address your comments and inquiries to, *Thrown To The Lions*, c/o **Arena Magazine** (our address is in the front somewhere) and if we like it (or hate it), we'll print it, no problem. Excellent.

Onward!

Dear *Arena*,

I must say that I really appreciate your magazine. I picked it up with the second issue (because I'm a Guy Gardner fan, sue me) when you were the former *Comics Arena* and I can't seem to find your first issue anywhere. Where can I get it? Also, why the format change? Issues #3 and #4 were bound different than the others but it seems like you went back to the staples for now. Either way though, I like it but you fellas really should make up your mind before some pickier people throw a hissy. Just a word of advice.

An article I'd like to see is the relationship between comics and TV and comics and video games and some interviews I'd like to see are John Byrne, Frank Miller, Adam Hughes and Alan Davis. Those guys are four of my top favorites, although I loved the Bart Sears interview in *Arena #4*. I think Bart is fantastic!

Anyway, keep up the good work and good luck!

Shane Downey
Birmingham, AL

Yo, Shane, sorry to hear about your trouble with Comics Arena #1. Check out our back issue ad in this very issue! We've sold out of ***Arena #4*** *and* ***#5*** *but it sounds like you got your hands on those two. Why the format change? A defensible query, to say the least. I know what you're thinking! "What is that guy talking about? Man, that dude is weird!" And... you're absolutely right! Anyway, it comes down to timeliness and if you read my Editorial (which I'm certain you did), I've been getting a lot of flak about that. It adds an extra two to four days to our printing so we decided to do away with it for now. From now on we'll be staple-bound and polybagged with a nifty insert.*

Oh, and Byrne will be gifting us with words of wisdom in ***Arena #11****. How's that for service?*

Dear Mr. Hickey:

Hello again, I see you took exception to my letter, and I completely understand. I will concede that I perhaps was too, shall we say enthusiastic, in my previous missives. I will attempt to temper that in this and future correspondence. I would, however, like to respond to your reply to my letter which appeared in issue #6. To wit:

First of all, I understand that you are not *Amazing Heroes*, nor do I think you should attempt to be, that was not the intent of my comparison. I merely used *AH* as a rule by which I tend to measure other comic mags, for at 200 issues it was the longest-lived publication of its type in the field (I exclude *CBG* for it is primarily a buying/ selling venue). Contrary to Jerry's response, my complaints were not "...snobbish nitpicking..." but (mostly) legitimate errors (I counted, four out of my six complaints dealth with the English-language style errors -- on which I was, as Jerry pointed out -- right, I will concede the other two points.)

Still, I do apologize for "overemphasizing" my various points, it was not my desire to bury you under the trivial. I was just attempting to make my point, and felt that without examples it would be impossible. Also, you misunderstood my motivations; I do not hold either you, your staff, or your publication in contempt. I'm sorry if you misinterpreted my motivations.

I honestly enjoy your publication (moreso than *Wizard*, which is penned exclusively for the fanboy/ speculator crowd). Given the choice I would rather read more editorial matter than find out how much the gold-covered, foil-stamped issue of *Splat-Man* is worth. As to your

editorial -- which (if I may succumb to hubris) -- seems directed at me; the only reason I tore into your style mistakes rather than dealt with content is that I very much enjoyed your content (which I stated in the opening and closing paragraphs of my missive).

I've long since given up on *Wizard* as I find it totally unreadable. Not because of typos, but because I simply can't stand that simpering, fawning, fanboy, investor mentality. I'm far more interested in comics as an enjoyable, excapest genre than as an investment. This is why I want *Arena* to succeed. My commentary on your style errors were intended on the level of an English teacher who may have liked the content of your thesis, but found its form unacceptable.

At the risk of "Using a bloody battle-axe when a pen-knife will do." I enjoy the content of *Arena*, I sometimes find its form jarring. Again, thanks for your time, and I hope you too will last 200+ issues.

Sincerely,

Scott Kincaid
Norwalk, CT

Apology accepted. Please write again.

Dear *Arena Magazine*,

Where's *Tribe*? You guys got one hell of a scoop.

Yours truly,

Eric Gillespie
Brooklyn, NY

***Tribe**, by Todd Johnson and Larry Stroman, debuts in March from Image Comics. Look for another **Tribe** trading card and a **Tribe** poster in **Arena #9** and yet another **Tribe** trading card in **Arena #10**. All new art by Larry Stroman!*

And, you're right. We did get one hell of a scoop.

Dear *Arena Mag*,

Let me begin by saying thanks for the issues (of *Arena*) that you sent me! I really enjoyed reading them and let me stress "reading"! I read them from front to back! Finally, a magazine that isn't written for ten year olds or is just filled with ads, ads, and more ads. Count me in!

One point of contention, however (sorry!). You guys have a very undecided format it seems and I realize you're probably working on it. I hope you come up with something to stick by soon. Even if you don't, you'll always have a loyal reader in...

Don J. Lawrence
Chetfield, AR

Enough with the format stuff! Anyway, thanks, Don. How do you like this issue for format? Keep reading. It only gets better.

Upcoming issues? Here's a run-down of what we have in store for you:

***Arena #8* features Al Gordon and Jerry Ordway as they speak about *WildStar* from IMAGE Comics along with a random IMAGE postcard insert (one of three) supplied by Sunset Images!**

***Arena #9* features Joe Quesada as he talks about *X-Factor* and future projects and has a Image *Tribe* trading card by Larry Stroman.**

***Arena #10* features Steve Bissette and Dave Dorman.**

***Arena #11* features John Byrne and a Malibu Ultraverse exclusive!**

But, that's it for *this* issue but we want to expand this section so WRITE!

ARENA MAGAZINE

CONTRIBUTOR'S INFORMATION

Writing: Address all submissions to Arena Magazine, 264 Main Street, Florence, Kentucky, 41042. Please enclose a S.A.S.E. Submissions must be typed, double spaced. Keep a copy of your manuscript. Only send copies. Always put your name, complete address, and phone number on each page of article.

Art: Address all submissions to Arena Magazine, 264 Main Street, Florence, Kentucky, 41042. Send good copies of stats please. Put your name and address on the back of each piece of art. Always include an S.A.S.E. if you wish your materials returned.

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Guest Editorial

by Jerry Smith

Batman: Seduction of the Gun is an anti-gun comic book recently published by DC Comics. The antagonists are the evil, corrupt elements of our society such as street gangs, gun manufacturers, and by association, Americans who enjoy the Second Amendment privilege of owning a firearm. Writer John Ostrander and artist Vince Giarrano succeed, in a well-told story, in building up the most hateful of straw men so no one questions the validity of the story when they are knocked down.

Ostrander in no way tries to balance pro and con firearm facts. In his black and white world of firearms, people who use guns are either black criminals or "fat white bastards". There is no room for anything in-between.

Chaka Zulu, a black criminal, is the "gang leader" straw man. He trades drugs to mobsters in return for illegal firearms. He and his gang are sick, violent punks who know they're misfits, so they band together on the road to hell. They murder recklessly, regardless of the victim's race or ideology.

Charles Mayall is the "gun maker" straw man. He owns Mayall Arms, to whom Commissioner Gordon appeals for help. Gordon wants a few cases of Mayall "Attack-90's", a fictitious semi-automatic handgun, to help catch Zulu's gang in a sting operation. Mayall acquiesces, but he is portrayed as a slimy cretin whose mission in life is to get his new and ever-expanding line of guns in as many hands as possible during his lifetime. Mayall's guns even have a finish that is "resistant to fingerprints", so we know he'd like nothing better than for gangs and criminals to overrun the world.

It's interesting to note that Commissioner Gordon, who fully supports and endorses Batman's vigilante tactics, abhors working with Mayall because he is a gun manufacturer. So while Batman can take the law into his own hands, even though he is not being directly threatened, I suppose that, in Gordon's eyes, if a citizen defended their own life by shooting a criminal, that would be wrong. Especially if he used a Mayall gun.

The school kids in *Seduction of the Gun* are the "lost children" straw men. Robin, in his identity of Tim Drake, infiltrates the school attended by a Zulu informant's daughter to protect her. While there, he discovers that inner city schools are really battle zones a shade worse than the Gaza strip on a bad day, and that ninety percent of the student population carries a gun to school. The unarmed students are called "herbs", and it's just a matter of time before the armed kids kill them all.

Ostrander does have some righteous indignation left over for Americans who take pride in owning guns for pleasure or protection. One character, when referring to such a person she saw on television shooting beercans as targets, remarks, "Man, I'm sick of that stuff! We got Beirut in the city and nothin' can be done because some fat white bastard wants to play with his guns on a weekend!". Ostrander wants people to believe that everyone who is for the right to own and shoot handguns is a pot-bellied redneck who needs firearms to make up for his lack of self-esteem. Tim Drake then calls the world "sick and twisted", supposedly because some people believe in the Second Amendment.

In the climax of the story, all of the straw men are knocked down. Two of the school children, one in a wheelchair, are shot to death. Most of the principle villains die as they lived, by the gun, mostly shot by each other. Batman disarms Chaka Zulu, who swears to return to do even more damage.

One of the major problems with *Seduction of the Gun* is that John Ostrander grossly oversimplifies the solution to the gun problem in our society and schools. For example, look at the guns the gangs were buying. It's against the law to buy stolen guns. The gangs were turning the semi-automatic (one round fires when the trigger is pulled) guns into fully-automatic (the entire clip fires when the trigger is pulled). This is also against the law. The students were carrying guns to school. This is illegal also, as it is for a minor to own a handgun, as it is to carry a concealed weapon and so on. Criminals do not obey gun laws, so, for reasons this "fat white bastard" will never understand, the anti-

gun faction's answer to the problem is to make more gun laws! More gun laws will only hurt the law abiding citizen who already obeys the numerous gun laws on the books. Say society outlaws guns in general. Who will be the most affected, the hood on the street? He's already breaking the law by buying stolen guns! Does the anti-gun faction think that these gangs and criminals will all-of-a-sudden say, "Come on boys, there's laws against these here guns now, let's all go down to the police station and turn 'em in." Get real. More gun laws will only affect people who respect guns and use them safely and responsibily. The end effect is the truism, "If guns are outlawed, only outlaws will have guns". It might be a cliche, but it is true. Not every caucasian who owns a gun is an uneducated "fat white bastard". And it's not their fault that crime is running rampant in inner city schools. In America, people are responsible for their own actions. Let's start dealing with the cause of the problem, not the symptoms. While it is easier to ban all guns than to eradicate poverty, only by attacking the problem at it's source will we be able to stop the violence in our society and our schools.

There is one good point in *Seduction of the Gun* that the media rarely addresses, that of realistic violence. How many television shows and comics feature bloodless bullet wounds (mostly because of censorship problems)? How many times have the Punisher, Daredevil, or even the Batman been shot, only to be recovered next issue or run a marathon with the wound? Not in *Seduction of the Gun*. When a person in the story is shot, they bleed. The bullets tear their body to shreds, there is blood everywhere, and the victims look to be in a great deal of pain. This should be the standard in every movie, TV show or comic, to avoid kids thinking of guns as toys.

It strikes me as strange that DC is taking a political stand with a comic book story. Large companies usually avoid taking sides on such controversial issues. Witness DC's attitude about religion when they backed out of publishing *Swamp Thing* #77, a story that dealt with religion, even after the plot had been approved and the art started. They were scared of offending someone then, why not now? Is it alright to be controversial about gun control (especially if you have the politically correct attitude), but not publish a story that deals with religion? DC's double standard is confusing. Perhaps they will issue other PC comics in the future: Batman: Roe v. Wade, Batman: Death Penalty Follies, or, Batman vs. the New Fearsome Five: Ronald Reagan, George Bush, Oliver North, Clarence Thomas and Rush Limbaugh.

I don't mean to make light of the gun problem in our society, or suggest it isn't as serious as John Ostrander makes it out to be. It's a major problem. Children should not have easy access to firearms, in the city or anywhere else. However, there are no easy solutions. Do we need tougher penalties for people who break the law? A mandatory death sentence for violent crime? Automatic expulsion and criminal punishment for students who carry a handgun to school? Unlike John Ostrander, I have no easy answer. I just know that banning all guns is an unviable solution to a much deeper problem.

This comic was brought about by the drive-by shooting death of John Reisenbach, a friend of DC president Jenette Kahn. Kahn's reaction to this horrible, senseless crime was to commission *Batman: Seduction of the Gun*, the proceeds from which are going to the John A. Reisenbach Foundation for gun-control activities. No one could say this is a bad thing, but readers need to realize that there are many sides to every problem in our society. These problems need to be thought out and dealt with rationally--we shouldn't automatically accept any solution the media thinks is the right one.

Let's Talk to Lurene

Interview by Joe Martin conducted in December '92.

Joe Martin: *When and how did your illustration career begin, Lurene?*

Lurene Haines: Well, it's a pretty ethereal beginning. I can't really put a certain time or date on it because I used to do a variety of illustrations for the university where I was taking my pre-med degree. That was my student job - how I made my income in between. So, it kind of sprouted from there. After some part-time illustration and design, I met Mike Grell up at a cartoonist's convention up in Victoria, in British Columbia, where I was living. He offered me the position as his assistant and I took that job in '86. That's the official day when I became a full-time professional.

JM: *For comic book illustration.*

LH: Yeah. I worked as an assistant for him on his comic book work but as far as comic books as a career, hmm, I'm not really sure when that transition actually took place. Probably when I branched off as a self-employed entity.

JM: *Before that, you were pre-med?*

LH: It was looming in the future, yeah. I completed my pre-med degree and I had every intention of going to medical school after that so...

JM: *But there was always your art, eh?*

LH: Well, it had always been there but I never really considered it as a source of income or a viable career because I had always been told by career counselors that, uh "You can't really make it in a career as an artist" so I just had that as a hobby on the side.

JM: *You spoke with counselors? Did you take any art education along the way?*

LH: No, not at all - I mean other than your standard high school art classes. I wish that I had, though. It would have made what I did and what I do now much easier, I believe.

JM: *All-natural talent, though?*

LH: Well, I believe that talent is about 90% practice. I had the opportunity to totally involve myself in art and immerse myself in it and because that's how I made my income. I had no choice but to get good at it. Kind of the equivalent of on-the-job training.

JM: *And you keep improving as time progresses.*

LH: I believe any serious artist that doesn't consistently and constantly strive to improve themselves isn't truly an artist. They're like a draftsperson.

JM: *Or a machine.*

LH: Yeah, machine-like. I'd say that's a pretty good simile.

JM: *So, Mike Grell offered you an assistant position. What was it exactly that you did?*

LH: Well, you pretty much do whatever the artist needs done in terms of art but the assistant position I had for Mr. Grell was a little bit more complicated than that because I pretty much ran everything. I did all his finances and book-

Detail of pencil and ink work on *Green Arrow: The Longbow Hunters* by DC Comics.

keeping, secretarial, reception, I handled all his travelling and, uh...

JM: *So, you worked in the same studio I take it.*

LH: Yeah, we shared the same studio and for a short while, about 6 to 8 months, Bill Willingham was in the same studio, too.

JM: *I know you love to paint. Did you do any painting at that time?*

LH: The painting I did at that time period was restricted to watercolor work. It was generally commissioned work. While I was there (Grell's studio), the work I had published was black and white and some colored pencil work and that was primarily in the "Longbow Hunters" (*Green Arrow*). I did do some inking on some *Jon Sable: Freelance* covers prior to the "Longbow Hunters" series.

But I think I'm more skilled at the painting than I am at the pen & ink. My inking abilities are somewhat limited and, again , I think it's just the amount of practice that I've had available to me. I also had quite a bit of trouble learning because Mr. Grell insisted on using a dip pen and I really had trouble with the pen line. I really couldn't master it at all and that comes from just "jumping in" in the middle and having no prior training with it. Somewhere along the way at a convention I mentioned to Brian Stelfreeze and Karl Story about how frustrating it was and they asked, "Well, what kind of brush are you using?" And I said, "I'm not. I'm using a pen." and they said, "A-ha! There's the problem!"

When I changed to a brush it was like a whole new world. It was much more effortless than it had been. But, I feel I ink adequately - which is the best description - and I have a lot of knowledge about inking techniques but it really doesn't hold that much interest for me. I like

the three-dimensional quality of working with color much, much more.

JM: *Do you have any influences on your art?*

LH: People whose artwork that I admire and try to emulate in my own work is, well, David's (Dorman), of course. He's very responsible for me knowing how to paint and he has taught me his technique. Without some of the information that he's given me I would still be where I was when I was working with Grell and that's just frustrated and "stumbling along".

My primary influences as a teenager were all the guys from The Studio: Kaluta and (Jeff) Jones and Barry Windsor-Smith and Berni Wrightson and Frank Frazetta - who was a particular influence because he was so hot at that time. His (Frazetta's) early work is just amazing and is still an influence on me. I really love Vargas' work, too. He's a big influence on my erotic work.

JM: *How is it having a studio with Dave (Dorman)?*

LH: Oh, I think it's great! Like I said, I shared a studio with Grell and Willingham and it was a truly miserable experience. I went to being married to, as well as sharing a studio, with Dave rather apprehensively because my past experience of sharing a studio with other artists was quite unpleasant. But this is wonderful! It's what I believe sharing a studio with another artist is all about. I mean, it's mutual support and positive feedback and constructive critique without being destructive, uhm, helping each other out when a deadline crush comes on. It's all the positive aspects of sharing a studio.

We have alternate schedules. We both take time during the day to go run business errands and I also take care of the business aspect of our business - all the bookkeeping and the correspondence and things like that, and the office is separate from the studio.

But, uh, most people don't know that Dave and I are married because I maintained my name from before we were married. I did that because I was already established and since we both work in the same industry it seemed rather foolish to have two Dormans and all the confusion associated with it, and Dave had no problem with it. His mother wasn't quite as happy.

JM: *I can imagine.*

LH: Yeah, but she's come to accept it and doesn't have any concerns at all now.

JM: *The mistake's been made by some people believing that you're married to* ***Punisher*** *artist Hugh Haynes.*

LH: Really? (Laughs) I'm not really that familiar with Hugh Haynes but, uh, what a fine, fine person he's married to, or that people believe he's married to!

JM: *(Laughs) Except the names are spelled different.*

LH: Right. Actually Haines isn't even my family name. I was married once before but it was so aggravating to go through everything that was involved in changing your name so I just said, "That's it! This is the name for the rest of my life. Learn to live with it." So, I guess that was a point of contention with Dave's mother that I got married and was using an-

other man's name.

JM: *Shouldn't have told her, I guess.*

LH: Well, I'm not one for keeping secrets from people.

JM: *That's good. Well, now we've cleared this up right here in the pages of* ***Arena*** *but, uh, I hear that's done frequently... the name thing.*

LH: That's right! For example, Bill Reinhold and Linda Lesman...

JM: *Frank Miller and Lynn Varley...*

LH: Right. Well, I'm not sure if they're married, though. I think they are just living together. I could be wrong.

JM: *Hmmm. Living together, eh? We'll turn this magazine into a smut rag, yet!*

LH: (Laughs) Well, I'm not about create any furors or controversy or gossip on that one. There's plenty of that out there already!

JM: *Okay, anyway, it seems you and Dave have a very different sense of color in your paintings.*

LH: Well, I tend to use brighter colors while Dave's work certainly lends itself well to earth-tones and that tends to be the palette he chooses to work in. However, a lot of his work is very vibrant colors.

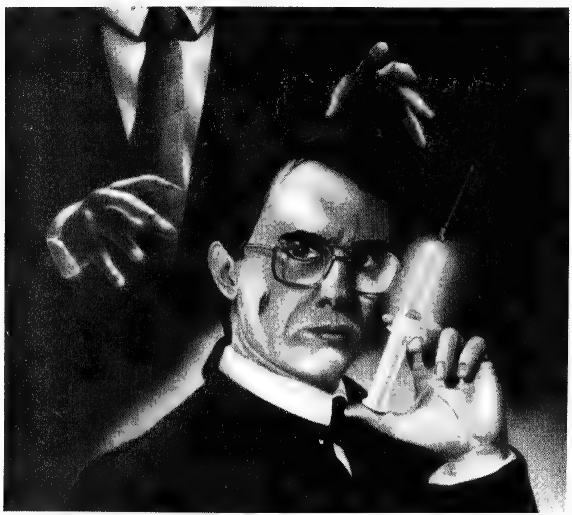
JM: *He does have a lot of bright oranges and blues.*

LH: Yeah, he likes to use Thalo Blue a lot, which is a very vivid blue, and that's not a natural earth-tone. But, at any rate, he thinks of himself as working in earth-tones and I think of myself as working in more vivid colors. I tend to like the strong contrast. It really does depend on the what the project is because the constraints that are on you when you work for an editor or a publisher are completely different than the ones you set on yourself when you work for your own pleasure. I like to go for monochromatic colors myself, but for a publisher I use bright yellows and reds because that jumps off the stands.

Yeah, Dave and I do have different color senses but sometimes even though we might not agree and think that the other is using a color that seems wrong, it tends to work out in the end.

JM: *So, don't listen to each other all the time.*

LH: Oh, no, no! We're real careful in giving each other criticism. It's always very constructive and that's why our studio relationship is so much more tranquil than it was when I was with Grell and Willingham. I think they were very judgmental and insecure in their own abilities and the only way to feel more secure or to justify their beliefs was to criticize non-constructively and it frequently felt



Rough sketch for cover painting for *Realm #2* from Caliber Press, Coming Spring 1993.

like you were being berated. I've never ever experienced that with David. All he offers are suggestions or advice and he's equally receptive to suggestions from me, even though I don't have the same training as him or the same expertise or experience or the duration in the business. He recognizes that frequently you need an objective eye to look at your work. That applies to writers, too, and I'm sure that you can relate to that. Sometimes you're so close to your creation that you're missing the most glaring errors and the most glaring inconsistencies that you need to step back and let somebody who's not emotionally involved with the project have a look at it so that you can get some true feedback.

JM: *Let's hype some projects, now. What's your all-time favorite?*

LH: Well, it's generally whatever project that I'm currently working on. Also, I feel really, really strong about anything that represents my work as a total package. Like the *Femina* book that I did. I was very, very enthusiastic and it's one of my favorites simply because not only did I get to do all the artwork inside, but the concept for the book was my own, the cover was mine, all the writing inside, the design of the book... being able to control the whole package was very gratifying. A story I wrote for *Hellraiser #19* just came out and I was really happy with the writing on that story except for a few editorial changes that were made. But it's still a good story... just not as good as it was. Unsatisfactory changes are just a part of comics I suppose. For example, the reproduction of the cover for the *Femina* book has almost no relationship to the original art and there's nothing I could do about that. There was no opportunity for me to proof the material before it was printed.

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JM: *Right. So, what's the current projects going on?*

LH: Well, I'm working on various projects in addition to writing a column for *Arena Magazine*. I'm working on the *Cat People* series for Malibu which is a year-long project. It will be a total of six issues and come out every two months. It's based on the *Cat People* movies, but is an original story written by Mike Baron. I'm very enthusiastic about that project! It has fully painted covers and interiors which is something entirely new for Malibu. They haven't really done many fully painted comics.

Other current projects... I'm also working on the *Thumbscrew* anthology for Caliber. I did illustrations for a three-part black and white story for that, and the third issue will have a painted cover that ties in with the story. I did a piece for their jam cover for *Deadworld* and I'm doing a cover for their new release of *Realm #2*. Malibu has approached me about doing some *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* covers so I'll probably be doing that and I'm doing a *Predator* one-shot story for Dark Horse that I'm working on with Kij Johnson.

JM: *Writing?*

LH: Yeah, writing. It'll be a 48-page one-shot. Now, depending on how the schedule works I may have an opportunity to be one of the artists on the book, if my commitments to the Malibu and Caliber projects allow. But it's a totally cool *Predator* story and it's completely non-government/ military oriented. It's very character-driven and involves a small story within the *Predator* mythos.

JM: *Excellent. Love those Predators. On an Earth-setting?*

LH: Yeah, on Earth. It's a pretty neat story. There's a lot of humor and some strong role-models that are atypical for our comic industry. Some really interesting angles to it. I'm a big believer that humor is very important to horror-writing because humor gives people a chance to relax from the adrenaline rush and then the next time you throw a shot at them they're in a relaxed state. If you can utilize humor in your horror work it really does tend to make it a more powerful horror work.

JM: *Any future projects?*

LH: Nothing concrete other than what I've told you about, but David and I have talked about doing some creator-owned projects in the future. We've talked about collaborating on a fully illustrated novel based on a character he created called Edge. I will probably write that.

After the *Cat People* project is over, I may take some time away from the comic industry and concentrate on doing some work on children's books. I've got some projects on the backburner that I'd really like to take some time and devote my full attention to them. One of them is based on a poem written by my niece who is only 8-years old. She won a national contest for it and I think that is really interesting.

JM: *You do stay busy! Time constraints are probably the worst thing in your life, eh?*

LH: Oh, gosh, yes! If they could make each day 48 hours long I could probably get a little bit more done.

JM: *So, still what's the single most exciting project you've got going?*

LH: I suppose the *Cat People* project.

JM: *That's going to be your first major project, isn't it?*

LH: Well, it's going to finally and inexorably allow me to separate my name from the *Green Arrow: Longbow Hunters* stuff. It was a fine project and I don't regret being involved with it and I don't want to insult anybody's tastes, but I really feel that I can do much better work. And since that was out in 1987 and now here it is 1993, I should be able to demonstrate that in six years I have become a much better and much stronger artist.

JM: *Anything else you'd like to do?*

LH: I think if I had to choose a particular character that I'd like to work on and that I have never approached the company about, is the Elektra character. I really like her. I always thought she was very intriguing and kind of atypical as a role-model type character. She's not cut-and-dried. She's not all-good or all-bad. That would be a fun project.

JM: *Maybe someday then, huh?*

LH: That would be nice, but I have plenty to keep me busy.

JM: *Certainly. You have worked for a number of companies. What are your feelings about how these different publishers operate?*

LH: I've worked for just about all the major companies now. I've worked for DC and for Marvel under their Epic banner. I've worked for Dark Horse and Malibu and Caliber. I've done work for smaller companies as well, with mixed experiences all the way around, but those five are the ones I've had the least problems with. DC and Marvel are larger corporate-type entities therefore their philosophies on how they deal with creators and how their business procedures operate are very different than the independents like Malibu and Dark Horse and Caliber. Dark Horse kind of sits in the middle now. They're not really the same as DC and Marvel - thank goodness - but they're no longer small enough to be the same friendly - and I use that in quotations "friendly" - company that the smaller independents are because they're halfway between being a small independent and a corporation.

JM: *Their growth is amaz-*

Cat People #1 - Malibu Publishing
Cover Art
Coming September 1993

ing.

LH: Yeah, and it can be very dangerous to grow that quickly, too. I've watched them with a great deal of interest. It will be interesting to see how they do and where they go given their incredible growth spurt. It may not manifest itself as a business problem for them but I think one of their mistakes is, um, diverging so rapidly - branching out in so many different areas so quickly. I think sometimes your personnel can't keep up with your changes and that can be detrimental for the company. So far they seem to be holding their own, though, and I'm pleased about that. There's some real good people at Dark Horse and I've enjoyed dealing with them. They've added some new people in the past year like Editor Kij Johnson, and Ronnie Noize who's handling the marketing, and they're both wonderful people and I'm very pleased that they were hired by Dark Horse. They're very nice.

JM: *Interesting.*

LH: Oh, it's fascinating! I have a very extensive background in the psychology field and it's hard for me sometimes to make my little mental psychologist go away (laughs) and I can't help being a bit analytical when it comes to dealing with these companies and mentally poking at and putting them under a microscope.

JM: *Let's talk about Caliber for a second.*

LH: Sure! That's a company that I'm always happy to talk about.

JM: *For the benefit of people who aren't into many Caliber titles, can you tell us a bit about their operations and titles?*

LH: The thing that always impressed me about Caliber is that they are very creator-supportive. Gary Reed, the publisher, has a little more freedom to let the creators have freedom because his operation is a lot smaller than Marvel's or DC's. Marvel has so much going on that they really have to "ride herd" on their creators to make sure that the work gets done and it's up to quality that they're satisfied with. Alternatively, Marvel and DC have huge budgets with which to pay their creators whereas Caliber works on a very small, very tight budget. Creators agree to work for Caliber on "spec", meaning that they do the work and they share in the profits. It's very hard to tell how a project will do but, of course, every creator feels that their project is the next *War and Peace*. They believe that their project is the one that's going to be the next "hottest" thing on the market. Caliber, within their limitations, goes to great lengths to promote their creators' properties so when Gary makes a decision to go with a new project he's basing it on a variety of

Deadworld - Caliber Press
Art for Artist's Jam Cover
Coming Spring 1993

factors. That's the nice thing about dealing with Caliber is that there's very good communication.

JM: *Cool.*

LH: Yeah. I feel that dealing with Caliber and Dark Horse and Malibu is a more pleasurable experience for me simply because I'm more involved with the project. I feel like I have more say in what happens. I don't mean to sound like I'm some sort of "control-freak" though. I'm more than happy to just sit back and be a player but it's nice to have some input and to be involved. It would be nice to say, "Look, I know you want to have this huge, gold-foil stamped logo on the cover however the artwork I'm doing is very complex and if you put that on there it will have a cluttered look and detract from the artwork..."

JM: *Right. I'm aware that you stay extremely over-busy in and out of comics. Tell me about the "outs".*

LH: I do way too much stuff. I do lots of volunteer work. I do "Meals On Wheels" and I do volunteer work with an elementary school one day a week and I'm a member of Kiwanas and I'm a tutor for Literacy Volunteers of America. I was on their board of directors for a year but I resigned that position because of the overload on work. I play piano when I can squeeze it in. I'm a seamstress so I do a lot of sewing and I make a large portion of David's and my clothes. I run competitively. I race and I like to do longer distance runs. As a matter of fact, at the San Diego Con this past year Bruce Bristow from DC Comics, one of his associates and myself did the America's Finest City Half-Marathon during the show. Oh, and I like to scuba-dive!

JM: *Jeez!*

LH: Yeah (laughs), I know! I love to read, too. I read exhaustively. I read everything - articles, magazines, books, and comics, although I read comics less so than the other material. I do a lot of writing, also - both professional and for my own pleasure. I write a weekly movie review column for a local paper, too. Uhm, David and I like to travel quite a bit so with all the conventions and appearances we get that opportunity and we try to squeeze in personal trips as well. And I love to cook a lot. Dave's great because he's my own captive audience and is forced to eat from the test kitchen a lot.

JM: *(Laughs) He has no choice in the matter.*

LH: Yeah! He has to eat. He can't say no (laughs). Fortunately, I must be very good at it because I've never had him look at me and say, "No, I won't eat that." And for a guy who's a picky eater that's a pretty nice compliment.

Anyway, I think that's plenty enough to do in my spare time.

JM: *I would agree. So, you get up in the morning, jog to the ocean, scuba for a while, come back and fix breakfast, go do some volunteer sewing, write in your journal and then start working on comics...*

LH: (Laughs) We plan to have kids in the next couple of years so I'm sure some of these will bite the dust. I might as well enjoy 'em while I can!

Partial List of Comic Credits for Lurene Haines

[as of February 6/93]

Comics

Adventure Publications: Ninja Elite (cover painting)

Apple Comics: Blood of Dracula #14 (cover painting)

Caliber: Django and Angel (painted cover), Baker Street #10 (painted cover), Thumbscrew #1 & #2 (illustrated three-part story), Femins: Dream Girls (32 pages b&w pin-up art with wrap oil painted cover)

DC Comics: Green Arrow: The Longbow Hunters #1-3 (pencil/ ink assist)

Dark Horse: Trekker Color Special #1 (coloring), Predator 2: Movie Adapt. #1 (coloring), Indiana Jones #1-4 (coloring)

Epic Comics: Hellraiser #3/ 15 page painted story (collaboration with Dave Dorman), Hellraiser #19: "In These Blue Depths Lie Hell" 15 page story (writing)

Fantagraphics: Amazing Heroes Swimsuit Issue; '87-'92 pin-ups

First Comics: Whisper#27 (coloring), Grim Jack (Munden's Bar) #57 (coloring)

Malibu: Robotech/ The Sentinels #2, #7 (cover colors), Spring Break Special #1 (b&w pin-up), Emeralds #1 (cover coloring), Lizardlady #1 (cover colors), Apache Dick Graphic Novel (cover colors), Miss Fury #1-4 and Miss Fury Special #1 (cover oil paintings), Reanimator #2-3 (cover oil paintings), Planet of the Apes #12 (cover colors)

Quality: Judge Dredd: Future Crimes Graphic Novel (48 pages coloring), Judge Child Quest (cover coloring), Judge Dredd: Hall of Justice Graphic Novel (48 pages painted color), 7 Sorcerers Portfolio (coloring), The Definitive D.R. & Quinch Graphic Novel (64 pages painted color)

Upcoming Publications

Arena Magazine: Issues #6-15: Regular column feature, Issue #10: Dorman/ Blasette interview

Advanced Warning! Magazine: 3 b&w, 1 full color illustration

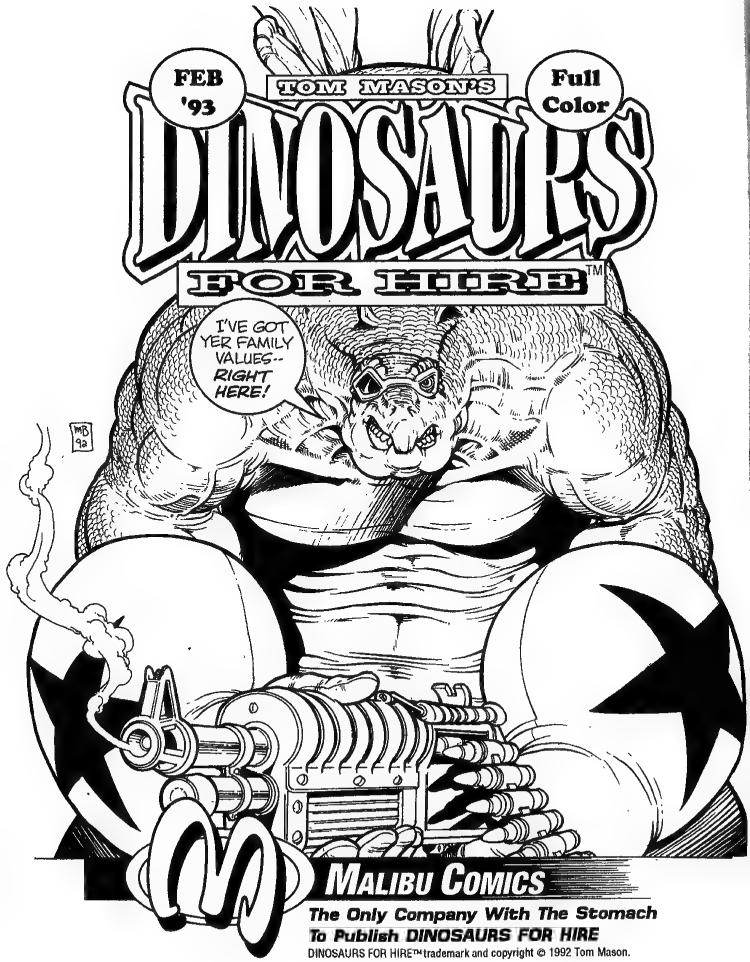
Big Sky Stories (illustrated short story anthology)

Big Time Productions: Edge: Lost In Texas (story for book illustrated by Dave Dorman)

Caliber: Thumbscrew #3 (b&w story illustrations & painted cover), Renim #2 cover art, Deadworld Jam Cover

Malibu: Bad Girls Go To Hell #1, Cat People #1-6 series (full-painted interior artwork and covers), Star Trek: Deep Space Nine cover art

Phoenix Rising Studio: Femins: Dream Girls print portfolio (coming Spring 1993)



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Comic News

Americomics News

This month *Jungle Girls* becomes a *FemForce* cross-over book, with an all new ongoing lead feature starring Tara Fremont of the FF, as the leader of an all-girl band of jungle explorers made up of old favorites: Nyoka Gordon, Cave-Girl, Princess Pantha and Tygra.

It seems that long before there was a Jungle Island, Tara's father bought her a small, pacific atoll. Unbeknownst to her, he allowed the government to conduct nuclear tests there decades ago. Upon discovery of this, staunch environmentalist Tara becomes incensed, and assembles this group of tropical beauties to check it out. What they find there is a strange gateway to an antediluvian world populated by dinosaurs, monkey men, and all manner of strange flora and fauna. The start of a new monthly feature chock full of jungle babes and thunder lizards written and drawn by Nick Norther.

And to draw attention to this new feature in *Jungle Girls*, AC will be issuing a unique "Jungle Girls" premium trading card, featuring a special rendering of Tara and her team, by Captain America penciller Rik Levins and inked by Mark Heike. This card cannot be purchased, but is available to any retailer who orders a minimum of 5 copies of *Jungle Girls #14* at no charge. This card will never be reprinted and is available only with *Jungle Girls #14*.

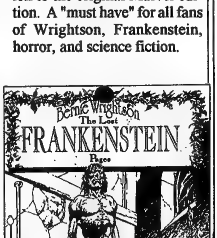
Apple Comics News

A must-have item! A real find!

One of Bernie Wrightson's early projects from Marvel was a lavishly illustrated edition of Mary Shelley's novel, *Frankenstein*. But Marvel only published a fraction of the drawings Bernie actually did for the book! In the intervening years, Wrightson fans have had to look in all sorts of odd places for the remaining pieces. Now, at last, the rest of Bernie's drawings are being collected in one high-qulaity volume.

The Lost Frankenstein Pages is square bound and printed on quality stock with high gloss covers. Inside are the unused pages from Bernie's Frankensten project, with the added bonus of preliminary sketches and examples of Bernie's other interpretations of the Frankenstein monster throughout his career.

In more than 150 years since it first appeared, no other artist has devoted so much time and talent to faithfully and meticulously illustrating Frankenstein, the single work which set the stage for both modern science fiction and modern horror. Bernie's effort will undoubtedly stand as the definitive artistic interpretation for centuries - perhaps forever. Now, Apple Press is making the rest of Bernie's Frankenstein project available in a single, magnificent volume! An indispensible, same-sized, matching companion to the original Marvel edition. A "must have" for all fans of Wrightson, Frankenstein, horror, and science fiction.



Caliber News

Deadworld returns in an all-new series with a new creative team! The new *Deadworld* series will be written by Randall Thayer, pencilled by Troy Nixey, and inked by Galen Showman. By the time the first issue ships, the trio should have the third issue finished and in house to Caliber guaranteeing a timely schedule.

"We know that we have to stay ahead on the *Deadworld* series," said Thayer, "Especially with the track record that *Deadworld* has had in the past." He added that he has the scripts for the first six issues completed. As of

mid-December, the first issue is nearly completed and the penciller Nixey estimated the second issue pencils to be finished by the first of the year for an April release. Nixey is best known for his *Prey* series for Monster Comics and his *Bill the Clown* series for Slave Labor. Publisher Gary Reed said that Nixey was in the running for the Deadworld job but it wasn't until he saw just Nixey's pencils that it was cinched. "His pencils are fantastic! We knew he was good at storytelling but we didn't know how good his pencils were. We always saw only finished art. Galen Showman was brought in to ink over Nixey. Showman is the illustrator of the connecting scenes in the Sinergy series and has a style that should please traditional readers as well as fans of the original artist, Vincent Locke."

The first cover of the new Deadworld series will feature a wrap-around "jam" cover with contributions from over 30 artists! Each artist has drawn a zombie and the center of the cover will be a new illustration from original Deadworld artist Vincent Locke who will also paint the cover. The limited edition version will have a solid black with red foil cover on top of the collage cover. Contributors include Dave Dorman, Lurene Haines, Guy Davis, J. Calafiore, Phillip Hester and John Dennis among others.

The series is scheduled to ship monthly but Reed said that if any kind of delays occur in future issues, *Deadworld* will skip a month periodically to keep the schedule intact.

Conquest Press News

Conquest Press, publishers of *Betty Page in Jungleland, Claws, Fang*, etc., is interested in getting 10 companies together to cooperate on a 3-issue mini-series, tentatively titled "10 Little Heroes". The story, loosely based on Agatha Christie's mystery thriller "Ten Little Indians" ("And Then There Were None") will feature 10 heroes and heroines, one from each company. Like Christie's story, the heroes start mysteriously disappearing one by one, until the climax when the villain is exposed. R.A. Jones (Malibu's *The Protectors, The Ferret*) has tentatively agreed to script out the story and the artists will be chosen from the pool of talent of the 10 participating companies. All companies, large or small, interested in participating are asked to write to Conquest Press, 14629 S.W. 104 St., Suite 244, Miami, FL 33186. All expenses, and all profits, will be equally shared by the participating companies.

Dark Horse News

Predator Goes to Prison

Dark Horse Comics publisher Mike Richardson announced today the upcoming release of the company's latest *Predator* mini-series, *Predator: Race War*.

Hard-hitting crime novelist Andrew Vachss (*Hard Looks, Another Chance to Get It Right*) and Dark Horse executive editor Randy Stradley (*Aliens vs. Predator*) write this tale of the galaxy's most dangerous hunter in the Earth's most dangerous hunting ground - Arizona's Paloverde Federal Penitentiary. The creature chooses as his prey a convicted serial killer on the way to the big house, and discovers that the U.S. federal prison system could well be the

ultimate wild game preserve. In hot pursuit is the mystery man named Cross, hired to stalk a creature he doesn't even believe exists.

Predator: Race War is pencilled by Jordan Raskin, who makes his professional debut with this project. His dynamic style is perfect for Predator, with its emphasis on action and atmosphere. According to Stradley, "Raskin is an artist to be closely watched." The series is inked by comics veteran Rick Bryant.

The first issue presents the debut of the aforementioned character, Cross, a mercenary under the employ of the U.S. government to track the intergalactic hunter. Cross, Vachss' first original creation for the comics medium, will continue to appear beyond the conclusion of the miniseries. The Cross character has also appeared in *Hard Looks*, the Dark Horse anthology series devoted entirely to adaptations of Vachss' short stories.

The book represents a change of pace for co-writer Vachss, author of the popular "Burke" series of crime novels (*Sacrifice, Blossom*). While his previous comics work has consisted almost entirely of adaptations of his short stories, the departure makes sense to Jerry Prosser, editor of both *Predator: Race War* and *Hard Looks*, "Andrew's work has always explored man's darker, predatory nature, so his attraction to the project was almost instinctual," said Prosser.

Painted covers for all four issues are by fan favorite Dave Dorman, completing a package that hits harder than any *Predator* series before it.

Manga Month

Mike Richardson, publisher, has proclaimed March 1993 to be Manga Month! What is manga? It's the Japanese word (both singular and plural) for comics. Dark Horse publishes comics from all over the world, and are proud to include some of the best manga with many of their offerings.

Manga published by Dark Horse this March will include the classic Japanese space opera *The Venus Wars II* by animation great Yoshikazu Yasuhiko, the comedy-adventure tales *Caravan Kidd* and *Outlanders Special #1*, both by Johji Manabe, and the biotech detective thriller *Version*, by hot new talent Hishashi Sakaguchi. The dazzling artistry of Masamune Shirow is showcased in *Orion* and the *Appleseed #4* trade paperback, and Masashi Tanaka's beautifully rendered tale, "Demon," premieres in the March issue of *Cheval Noir*, Dark Horse's monthly anthology of international comics.

Many American writers and artists have been influenced by Japanese style and storytelling. Adam Warren is one of these, and fans of this artist extraordinaire will confirm that new readers are in for a treat this coming May when Dark Horse proudly presents the continuing adventures of his sexy sci-fi secret agents, The Dirty Pair.

As part of our Manga Month celebration, Dark Horse is offering a variety of goodies to retailers to help promote their manga line, including a split *Appleseed/ Orion* poster, and a special manga poster featuring *Outlanders, Venus Wars II, Version*, and *Caravan Kidd*. In addition, they've got some nifty new (and free) Dark Horse manga pins for your pleasure!

If you've never picked up a manga title, there's never been a better time to try - Dark Horse has a wide assortment form which to choose. If you're already a manga fan, they've got some new goodies that will satisfy your manga yen. They're all from Dark Horse Comics, publisher of the world's greatest manga!

DC Comics News

Superman's Back!

The ongoing Superman titles return to the stands with the release of *Adventures of Superman #500*. The storyline that shook the world and created the fastest-selling comic book of all time continues with even more fantastic plot twists, mysterious developments and never-before-seen cover enhancements.

The cover of *Adventures of Superman #500 Collector's Edition* has a uniquely enhanced, removable translucent cover panel over a painted image by Jerry Ordway. This intriguing cover embellishment effectively hints at the mysterious contents that lie beneath it.

Continuing in the same trend are the covers of *Action Comics #687, Adventures of Superman #501, Superman #78* and *Superman: The Man of Steel #22* which all have die-cut overcovers that, when opened, reveal another cover, each featuring a distinctive new-look Superman. And, as a bonus, they each contain a different bound-in miniposter.

A new-look Superman? Editor Mike Carlin says, "Since Superman died, we've heard a million theories about his coming back. The time has come to solve the mystery and get on with the never-ending battle. We told you the story isn't over just because there was a dead body on the last page of *Superman #75*!"

The 64-page *Adventures of*

Superman #500 is written by Jerry Ordway in his final issue as regular writer of the series. Included as well are special pages form the entire writing team of the Superman titles, Dan Jurgens, Louise Simonson, Roger Stern, and incoming writer Karl Kesel, documenting four "sightings" of Superman. Art is provided by Tom Grummet and Doug Hazlewood, with pages from Dan Jurgens, Jon Bogdanove, and Dennis Janke, and Jackson Guice and Denis Rodier.

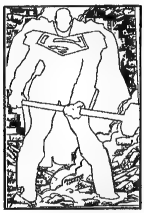
Adventures of Superman #500, shipping April 13th, is a landmark event and DC has two editions to celebrate. The *Collector's Edition* contains no ads, 8 extra pages, and is exclusive to the direct market, featuring all-new art and story pages. The cover has the uniquely enhanced, removable translucent cover panel over a painted image by Jerry Ordway. The *Newsstand Edition* has a different cover by Tom Grummet and Doug Hazlewood.

Superman is still dead as *Adventures #500* begins and his foster father, Pa Kent, is in a coma. On another plane of existence, Superman and Pa join forces to save each other from the light at the end of the tunnel. Pa's will to live successfully brings him back, but what about Superman?

The answers are revealed two weeks later as "The Reign of the Supermen" begins in *Action #687, Adventures #501, Superman #78* and *Superman: Man of Steel #22*, all shipping on the same day. Each Collector's Edition will have the special die-cut cover exclusive and the Newsstand Editions will have different covers.

Which is the real Man of Steel? Is it:

* The cyborg from space - half machine, half alien? He proclaims himself a Superman retooled for the future, and no one has the guts to contradict him.



* The cold super-being who sets up shop in the Fortress of Solitude and relentlessly takes the law into his won hands - even if it means he must shoot first and ask questions later?

* The super-powered teenager who appears to be cloned form the first Superman? He must be a clone - why else would he have no memory of a private life?

* The steelworker John Henry Iron, buried alive during Superman's battle with Doomsday who, like a man possessed, uses his talents to create high-tech suit of armor and weaponry to literally become a Man of Steel?

And if any of these beings is Superman, why can't anyone find Clark Kent?

The curiosity level of comic book readers and the general public is high, and the entire Superman team is geared to deliver a story guaranteed to keep you hooked for a new chapter every week! Don't miss it or you're crazy!

He Tasks Me...

At last! J'onn J'onzz, the Martian Manhunter, takes command once again in a new ongoing monthly series that puts an exciting new spin on the Justice League. And in issue #1, readers can feel a part of the Martian Manhunter's endeavor with the bound-in membership card.

Not every global crisis can be solved by a team of superpowered warriors charging to the rescue in the light of day. Some situations are so delicate, they require a surgical strike - covert operations carried out by hand-picked operatives to handle missions with finesse. When such a crisis develops, the United Nations

deploys the *Justice League Task Force*.

Led by the Martian Manhunter, Justice League Task Force uses a rotating membership drawn from inside and outside the current JL lineup, recruiting at need those heroes best suited to handle a given mission.

Structured in story arcs of varying length, *Justice League Task Force* has the added distinction of using different writers for each arc, a la the enormously popular *Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight*. Penciller Sal Velluto, former artist of *X-O Manowar* and *Rai* from Valiant and *Moon Knight* from Marvel, and inker Jeff Albrecht form the regular art team for what promises to be an exciting, unique and accessible team book.

In the first three-part story, written by *Amazing Spider-Man* writer David Micheline, the Martian Manhunter leads Nightwing, guest starring from The New Titans and the Batman titles, along with Aquaman, Green Lantern, and the Flash on a mission to prevent a doomsday device from destroying a Caribbean island that is torn by rebellion. Complicating matters is the presence of a formidable new supervillain called Blitz, who was hired to protect to underworld interest's of the island's ruthless drug lords. The Task Force must overcome Blitz and his masters without igniting the island's volatile political situation.

Eclipse News

No other publisher has been associated with graphic novels for as long as Eclipse, and in 1993 they celebrate their fifteenth anniversary. Since 1978, when they released *Sabre* - the first graphic novel ever produced for the direct sales market - they've changed the very nature of comic book publishing.

During the last 15 years, Eclipse has achieved phenomenal success with *The Hobbit*, currently the world's best selling graphic novel; introduced Clive Barker to comics readers; invented graphic journalism with *Brought to Light*; and continue to publish a diverse line of perennial sellers such as *The Rocketeer, Opera, Miracleman*, and *Beamworld*.

Now, in a joint venture with HarperCollins Publishers, Eclipse will further broaden the foundations and widen the appeal of the graphic novel. They will marry the work of Doris Lessing, Clive Barker, Anne McCaffrey, Dean R. Koontz, Marion Zimmer Bradley, Loren D. Estleman, Peter Straub and other major authors with sophisticated art and design from the world's leading artists.

To celebrate our fifteenth anniversary, we will launch an extensive advertising campaign for Eclipse Graphic Novels. In addition, we have put together an aggressive marketing program, including brochures, point of purchase posters, 20-copy counter displays and full-sized floor displays.

Join the celebration as 1993 becomes the year of Eclipse Graphic Novels.

ECLIPSE
GRAPHIC NOVELS

Heroic News

New Artist, Sparks Fly

In addition to his work on *League of Champions*, Heroic Publishing's fabulous new artist, Henry Martinez, is picking up the pencilling chores for the *Sparkplug* miniseries. Henry's first work will appear in the second issue of Sparkplug, shipping in March. The dynamic stylized and detailed realism of Martinez's pencils is certain to boost him quickly into the ranks of fan favorites.

Working in the comic book medium is the fulfillment of Henry's lifelong dream. His work has been strongly influenced by the work of John Byrne, John Buscema, Barry Windsor-Smith, and Steve Rude among others. After college, Henry took his portfolio around for the next six months and eventually found a full-time job at Neal Adams' Continuity Studios and after that found a job with a top ad agency.

Persuaded by friends to try and get into comics again, his first books were for Personality Comics on three titles from their "Spoof" line, including *Spiderfemme, Batbabe*, and

Superbabe. Henry's first work for Heroic Publishing will appear in the second issue of *Sparkplug* and in *League of Champions #12*.

Statema Joins Forces With Gross

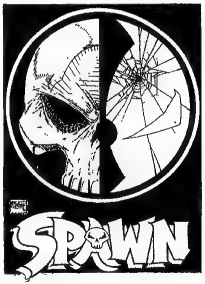
The talented artist Statema, whose work has recently appeared in *Deathstroke: The Terminator*, has joined forces with Daerick Gross and Heroic Publishing to become a principal artist for the new Reiki Warriors comic books starring Murcielaga She-Bat and Mister No. Statema's first work with Heroic will appear in at least three different comics. Statema is on tap to do three chapters in the eight-part "Rings for a Demon" saga that runs across the entire line of Heroic's titles during the spring of 1993. These chapters are currently scheduled to appear in *Icicle #5*, *Sparkplug #3*, and *League of Champions #12*.

Statema is also on tap to do the artwork for the 34-page *Origin of Murcielaga She-Bat*, scheduled to ship in May in the deluxe issue of Murcielaga's hot new solo title. Collectors should note that copies of November's first issue, which featured art by Daerick Gross, are already selling for more than three times cover, and are becoming difficult to find at any price!

With such recognized talents as Daerick Gross and Statema coming on board, it's clear that Heroic Publishing titles are rapidly earning themselves a new prominence in the fan and collector's markets.

Image News

Scorching Hot Releases



That's right. Frank Miller. Todd McFarlane's *Spawn #11* will be written by fan fave Frank Miller with a pull out poster by Geof Darrow. They come by the hundreds and they've got all the guns in the world. All they're after is a rotten patch of cracker pavement and all that's on it are drunks and defamers and losers. But the killers don't get it. These are Spawn's people, and this is his home.

By Todd Johnson and Larry Stroman, *Tribe #1* is the actual first Image release since going solo. Tribe is the Brooklyn based story of a group of individuals brought together under hostile circumstances. Led by brilliant scientist and entrepeneur Murdock Ellison (a.k.a. Blindspot), Tribe's origins are rooted in the treacherous dealings of Europan, a powerful international corporation seeking worldwide influence by cornering the market on breakthrough technology and research. After learning of Europan's ultimate goal, Ellison recruits victims of Europan's treachery to strike back at the deadly corporation. Featuring Shift, Hannibal, The Front, Steel Pulse, Fly Girl, Short Order and Out Cold, Tribe is a fast-paced, action oriented urban drama involving a web of intrigue surrounding both the formation of the Tribe core and Europan's hidden power base of underworld and political connections.

It's not a hoax and not a dream! WildStar dies in Al Gordon and Jerry Ordway's *WildStar#3*. It's no joke. No trick. He really kicks the bucket. No black arm band and no free buttons. Just plain dead. And as if that isn't enough... Enter the Dragon, Erik Larsen's Savage Dragon, that is. Boy, wait till you see it.

Fresh from their debut in Darker Image, Sam Kieth and William Messner-Loebs chronicle the beginning of a story that will ultimately pit the Maxx against the greatest foe he's ever faced, leading up to a dramatic conclusion in the first issue of the *Maxx* continuing series!

And from the pages of *Youngblood*, comes two of the hottest names in comics today, Rob Liefeld and Jae Lee, who kick off the first of this four-issue spotlight series, *Youngblood: Strike File #1*, with twin tales focusing on *Youngblood's* most popular characters, Diehard and Chapel. To start things off, Liefeld and Lee team up to explore Chapel's past in the first chapter of a two-part story that will ultimately tie in to upcoming events in both *Spawn* and the upcoming *Youngblood* regular series. Then, as if that wasn't enough, Diehard goes it alone against the *Savage Dragon's* Super Patriot in the first of an explosive three-part story written, penciled and inked by Rob Liefeld. And, to top it all off, this issue also features dual covers by Liefeld and Lee!

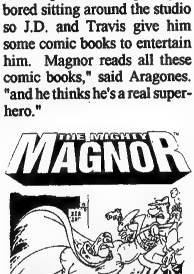
Malibu News

Sergio Goes To Malibu

While Superman's in absentia, Sergio Aragones has proceeded to create the strongest full-color superhero in the world. Comic fans beware! *The Mighty Magnor* has landed, leaping full-blown from the minds of Aragones (*Groo The Wanderer*) and fellow Groo-mate Mark Evanier.

"A planet in another galaxy sends a robot scout to invade Earth," said Aragones. "The scout crash-lands and all his mechanisms go berserk, and he wanders around in the streets." Magnor comes across two would-be cartoonists who decide to use him as a model for their new superhero book.

J.D. (a writer) and Travis (an artist) take their great new discovery back to "The Comic Book Conspiracy," their comic book studio. They clean the scout up, put a cape on him, call him "The Mighty Magnor" and POW! Instant superhero. Magnor gets bored sitting around the studio so J.D. and Travis give him some comic books to entertain him. Magnor reads all these comic books," said Aragones. "and he thinks he's a real superhero."



"*The Mighty Magnor* is superheroes as only Sergio can do," Editor Chris Ullm said. "Cross the Terminator with Groo and throw in Tim Burton's Batman for spice and you've got Magnor."

As a first issue enhancement, *The Mighty Magnor #1* will feature the industry's first ever pop-out cover, on first printings only, pre-set at 150,000 copies. "Because of the lead time needed to produce a cover of this complexity, we found it impossible to wait for retailer orders and still release *Magnor* on time," said Alan Payne, Malibu marketing director. "So, instead of shipping late, we polled a number of retailers from all over the U.S., and asked them what they would order, and based on their response we were able to make a reasonable guess on initial orders." This terrific collectible is due out in March from Malibu Comics.

Dale Keown Cover For Crossover

Dinosaurs meet Ex-Mutants in the first official all-star Malibu Comics crossover. The excitement takes place in *Dinosaurs For Hire #3*. "It's an all-out slugfest," said creator/writer Tom Mason, adding, "although no slugs will actually appear." A fantastic cover by Dale Keown kicks off this energetic, high-powered adventure. According to Mason, "This is all very exciting! This is the first time two Malibu titles have crossed over like this!"

Malibu's own Ex-Mutants are thrust through a dimensional vortex that sends them into a different time zone. They "bump into" the Dinosaurs, and comic book history is made! The events in this crossover tie-in directly with events in the regular *Ex-Mutants* series, taking place between *Ex-Mutants #3* and *#4*.

Ex-Mutants writer Hank Kanalz said, "When the Ex-Mutants return to their own world in *Ex-Mutants #4*, Kildare figures something had to generate enough power to form the vortex they went through. He sends them out to find the power source, because he knows whatever was powerful enough to form the vortex is powerful enough to run his Ex-Mutant conversion chamber... and save his very life."

Malibu's Roland Mann, the editor on both *Dinosaurs For Hire* and *Ex-Mutants*, said, "This is the first time that two comic books that are also Sega Genesis video games have crossed over -- the Sega Genesis game players will actually get a chance to see, in one comic book, characters from their two favorite games."

Dinosaurs For Hire 2099?

Malibu will take on Marvel Comics' "2099" series when "Dinosaurs For Hire 2099" debuts as a back-up feature in *Dinosaurs For Hire #2*. The feature is written by creator Tom Mason and illustrated by Joel Thomas and Bruce McCorkindale.

"I can't really talk too much about it," Mason said, "without giving away the storyline. Let's just say that fans of Marvel and Image Comics won't be disappointed. And neither will fans of *Dinosaurs For Hire*!"

The addition of "Dinosaurs For Hire 2099" to the series is in keeping with the book's format. Previously, the series has included take-offs on The Punisher and Predator. Future issues will feature the Ex-Mutants crossover as well as a cameo appearance of Robotech characters in issue #5.

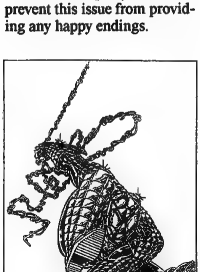
In addition to the regular full color monthly comic book, *Dinosaurs For Hire* will be a video game for the Sega-Genesis system and is currently being developed as an animated television series for 20th Century Fox.

Marvel News

A Tragic Death: Spidey Vs. Green Goblin

Spectacular Spider-Man #200 will feature the ultimate showdown between Spider-Man and the Green Goblin. The 48-page special edition will pit Peter Parker against his best friend Harry Osborne in an action-packed confrontation. This landmark issue will mark a major turning point in the life of Parker, and will also feature the tragic death of an integral Spider-Man character. Writer J.M. DeMatteis has scripted this earth shattering issue which is superbly illustrated by Sal Buscema. *Spectacular Spider-Man #200* is wrapped in a special holo-grafx foil cover featuring a dynamic web pattern.

Spectacular Spider-Man #200 opens with Spidey returning from his battle with the X-Men only to find that Harry has escaped from captivity and is roaming free as the Green Goblin. Spidey realizes that he must find and stop the Goblin and put an end to this ongoing conflict once and for all. But Parker is torn by the inner conflicts he faces in tracking down this villain. After all, Harry is Peter's best friend and Peter feels that his exhibiting the Green Goblin persona is a sickness that can be cured. His concern for Harry's welfare is muddled by the fact that the Goblin is a dangerous threat not only to the public, but specifically to Parker and his friends and family since Harry knows that Parker and Spider-Man are one and the same. Harry, on the other hand, is filled with nothing but a desire for revenge on his best friend for what he feels was Parker's deliberate destruction of his life. The result is a violent and final battle between the two people who are both ultimate enemies and best friends. To top all this off, the resulting death of a major character in Spidey's life will prevent this issue from providing any happy endings.



Spidey Dons A Suit Of Armor

Spider-Man is in for the fight of his life against the New Enforcers in a special 48-page 100th issue of *Web of Spider-Man*. Writer Terry Kavanaugh, penciller Alex Saviuk and inker, Joe Rubenstein have produced this special anniversary issue that will give us a Spider-Man we have never seen before. This issue will feature a special holo-grafx web patterned cover and will introduce the brand new 'Spider-Armor'.

Following their introduction in *Web of Spider-Man #99*, Spidey must face the power of the New Enforcers, a mysterious new criminal group whose ranks include the likes of Dragon Man and the Super Adaptoid. In addition, *Web #100* also features the conclusion to the long

running storyline involving Bloodrose and Richard Fisk. Some shocking events will wrap up this storyline including the revelation as to just who 'Alfredo' really is!

Spidey Meets... Ren And Stimpy?

Publishing history will take place in March with the release of Marvels' *The Ren & Stimpy Show #6*. This issue will mark the first ever Marvel/ Nickelodeon crossover as Spider-Man guest stars to save the day when an evil genius zaps 'Powder Toast Man' into a 'cereal killer'.

Nickelodeon's Ren and Stimpy cartoon series began as a cult favorite and has grown into a huge mainstream success. The series follows the adventures of an asthmatic Chihuahua, Ren, and his simple feline sidekick, Stimpy, and is marked by its irreverent style and bizarre humor. The success of this cartoon duo continued in October when Marvel Comics published the first issue of *The Ren & Stimpy Show* comic. The demand for the first issue made it an instant sellout. The upcoming appearance of the phenomenally popular Spider-Man in the book is guaranteed to cause another sellout. Retailers and fans be advised!

Ten Years Of Flight

Alpha Flight, Canada's premiere mutant superhero group, will celebrate its tenth anniversary with the publication of *Alpha Flight #120*. From their first cameo appearance in (*Uncanny*) *X-Men #120*, the team was quick to rise in popularity and was awarded its own title, written and drawn by John Byrne, in 1983. Since that time, the book has prided itself on covering topical issues that have held a loyal and sizeable readership. With issue *#120*, writer Simon Furman, penciller Pat Broderick, and inker Bruce Patterson have put together an anniversary story that will change the direction of the Flight forever. The issue features the institution of Canada's Super-Hero Registration Act, which is included as an 11" x 17" poster, polybagged with the book.

Alpha Flight #120 opens in the aftermath of the team's battle with the Wrecking Crew. The team barely has time to breathe when they find themselves coming to the aid of a young paranormal seeking refuge from the mercenary group, The Hardliners. As they enter the battle with the Hardliners, Alpha Flight must also struggle with the decisions facing them with the institution of their country's new Super-Hero Registration Act.

Editor Rob Tokar explains that the team will struggle with its role as a government sanctioned group in the face of these new regulations. While personally against the Act, Alpha Flight will be forced into a new direction by the legislation. "Alpha Flight will still be a superhero team," explains Tokar, "but its duties will now also include seeking out non-registered mutants and super beings. Alpha Flight will hate being put into this position, but they'll do it to make sure the Act and the program behind it are not misused. As a result, Alpha Flight will be heroes, but looked upon as government stooges by the super-human populace. Canada will be changed for quite some time and Alpha Flight along with it."

U.N. FORCE

SPINS OFF TWO TITLES!

Major Talents Come Aboard to Expand Gauntlet Universe.

U.N. Force the Flagship title of the Gauntlet universe. will have two new on-going series developed for Spring of 1993 that have a core relationship with the *U.N. Force* group. The two new titles. *U.N. Force Files* and *Paradigm* will be full color as well.

"We were surprised at the reaction that we got on the *U.N. Force* series," said Gauntlet publisher Gary Reed. "and since the two new projects were well into production. we decided to launch them right away." Reed said that all three series based on *U.N. Force* will maintain a monthly schedule.

U.N. Force Files is a direct spin off from *U.N. Force* and each issue of files will feature two stories focusing on the indi-

vidual U.N. Forcers in a way that can not be done in the parent title due to the sheer size of the team. Files. like the parent *U.N. Force* book. will also feature stories based on actual historical events and will tie in close with the continuity of the regular series. A different art team will provide each story and will include veteran illustrators as well as talented newcomers. Already lined up for the first few issues of *U.N. Force* are Keith Pollard, who is well known for his long runs on *Iron Man, Thor, Fantastic Four,* and *Vigilante*. Pollard currently is the main artist for the Marvel Universe series. Jason Pearson, who just completed a year on *Legion of Super Heroes,* has also worked on Batman and is in line for one of the X books from Marvel. Tom Artis, a long time comics veteran best known for his work on *She-Hulk,* and cover artist supreme Brian Stelfreeze who gained a great deal of acclaim for his *Cycops* series. Other talented professionals are currently being lined up and information will be released as it is available.

U.N. Force files #1 is scheduled for a May release and will feature Pollard illustrating a story of Hunter Seeker, the leader of America's U.N. Force contingent. dealing with the plight ot Vietnam veterans. Darryl Cobb will do "Dynasty's End," a story of the Indian character, Locus, as she has to deal with the assassination of her nation's Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi.

A special edition of *U.N. Force Files*, numbered as #0, will reveal the origin of the operation that launched the international team of super powered individuals. The special #0 edition will also feature a close up look of all of the members and fact sheets describing their powers. In addition, there will be an exclusive preview of a new series coming this summer that will tie in with *U.N. Force, Beck and Caul.*

The second series to spin off from *U.N. Force* will be *Paradigm*. Coming in April, this full color series will feature Masterspy. The primary antagonist in *U.N. Force* as well as the mercenary Predator who will make his first appearance in *U.N. Force #4.*

Paradigm will be a group book that will have Predator joining three ordinary people unwillingly transformed into super powered entities through a series of experiments and intrigue by an evil corporation known as InterCorp. Also joining the group will be the gravity technician, Tekq, who was featured in his own tour issue miniseries last summer, also from Gauntlet Comics.

U.N. Force will continue to serve as the primary focus of the Gauntlet Universe and the summer of 1993 will see other characters crossing over into the series. The crossovers planned include new characters, other Gauntlet titles, and even some other characters published by different publishers. As soon as final details are worked out, Gauntlet will issue an announcement.

Mirage News

Usagi Yojimbo makes his move! You've been reading and enjoying *Stan Sakai's Usagi Yojimbo* for years now. His beautifully rendered art and well-crafted stories have made fans of us all. With this in mind, no one is more pleased than Mirage to announce that *Usagi Yojimbo* is now a Mirage comic! The series, which up until now has been published by Fantagraphics, has found a new home.

Stan wants all of his readers to rest assured that the move to Mirage will not change the tone or the content of the book. In their eyes, it has always been *Stan Sakai's Usagi Yojimbo* and that is how it will remain. But you will see a couple of differences when the Mirage edition hits the stands this March. The biggest is that the book, which has been published in black-and-white until now, will be published in full color! Tom Luth, the regular colorist on the Usagi covers and the color specials, will be the regular colorist on the series.

The storyline continues from Fantagraphics' impressive 38 issue run but since this marks a new stage in the adventures of Usagi, Mirage's first color issue will be numbered as *Usagi Yojimbo Volume Two, No. One.*

Tundra News

An Adults Only Peter Pan? Believe it! This incredible look at J.M. Barrie's famous story opens in the slums of London where a group of young children cling together for survival. Peter is hungry and cold, surrounded by cruel and manipulative adults. But his life is about to change. Suddenly a falling star lands in his shirt; Tinkerbell has arrived! She takes him to another world where Captain Hook feeds men to the crocs and buxom nymphs conspire to rescue Peter from pirates in Regis Loisel's *Peter Pan #1*!

How's Madman? Orders are growing with every issue! Why? Because it truly is the greatest adventure series in comics! Tundra Publishing would like to thank all the comics fans, retailers and distributors for recognizing something great when it comes along! The thrilling second issue in Mike Allred's *Madman Adventures* series wraps up the cliffhanger from issue #1. Madman lands in the past and meets some really strange characters. With special Mystery Guest Inks, and the Madman Back Cover Exhibition Gallery - this time by Al Columbia - this promises to be the biggest issue to date!

Counterparts by Stefan Petrucha and Barry Crain introduces a population hopelessly addicted to a personality drug - junkies with literally no minds of their own. Sounds serious? Well, it's not. Heironymous Jones has been disintegrated into his component parts. Each of his body parts retains mobility and distinct personas: the torso, the left and right legs, the left and right arms, and the head. Outraged by the corporation controlling the populace's minds with Temporary Personality Grafts, the same corporation responsible for Heironymous' horrible disintegration, the body parts vow vengeance on corporate irresponsibility and indifference. Action, humor, plot twists... *Counterparts* will be the surprise hit of 1993!

Atomeka March Releases

Pale Horses written by Steve White and Dan Abnett with art by Gary Erskine is set in the year 2009. Three years ago, China once again invaded Vietnam and Laos and although a United Nations multi-national force intervened immediately, the fighting continues. The Allies' superior firepower and mobility pitted against the armored mass of the Chinese - a fierce and frightening tale of war that hover between Apocalypse Now and Close Encounters. Did the CIA use UFO technology to create the stealth bomber? What are the Pale Horses, and who are the Cyborg pilots who fly them? Who is the Man in Black and what secrets does he have about the Allied Forces? What are the alien forces that manipulate this bloody war? Read it.

Christopher Grahame is a highly successful children's writer in *Kingdom of the Wicked* by Ian Edginton and D'Israeli, but he's also a man on the edge of madness. Always a sickly child, Chris had invented a fantasy world, Castrovalva, during his long illness. A land where tin soldiers and teddy bears came to life. He knew the world so well he felt he had walked its streets and talked to its people. Now, Chris is cracking up, and in his dreams he is back in the world of his child-

TEMPERED STEELE
Bob Hickey, Don Hillsman and Chris Leidenfrost
TALISLANTA: RUNE
Stephan M. Sechi and Ron Spencer
RACE DANGER
Bob Hickey, Dan Lauer and Chris Leidenfrost
THIS SUMMER. SKY COMICS.

hood - but things are frighteningly different. The world is in the throes of a bloody and brutal war. His land of wonder erupts into a field of battle - a Kingdom of the Wicked. A disturbing tale somewhere between Stephen King and Lewis Carroll that is not to be missed.

In *Strange Embrace*, by David Hine, Sukumar Kanita's family thinks the boy is a dreamer. Sukumar is caught up in the troubled no-man's-land of puberty. He is confused by strange new longings. Sukumar's dreams tell him things - they told him he would meet Alexander, the menacing, arrogant Albino who keeps a cellar full of undead memories. Here we find hidden secrets, grotesque shadows and the memories of two generations of magic and madness! A masterful piece of modern Gothic as terrifying as it is wondrous.

WARP GRAPHICS ANNOUNCES 1993 "FANTASY WITH TEETH" TOUR

Wendy and Richard Pini, co-creators of the *Elfquest* series of comic books and graphic novels, will be "on the road again" throughout 1993. Warp Graphics, Inc. announces the "Fantasy With Teeth" Tour, celebrating the 15th Anniversary of the first publication of *Elfquest*. The tour kicks off January 23rd and 24th with the Great Eastern Convention at the Jacob Javits Center in New York City.

Although the Pinis are the tour headliners, they will not necessarily be the only attractions at the various stops. "We're looking at 1993 from a 'Team Elfquest' perspective," said Richard Pini, Warp Graphics's publisher. "Ever since we opened up the Elfquest universe to new story and artistic visions, we've been blessed with the work of many talented people who live all over the country. If Wendy and I show up somewhere, and one of our contributors lives nearby, then we want that person to sit with us at the autograph table."

In conjunction with the tour, Warp Graphics is mounting its largest promotional effort ever. The year-long tour will feature a special signed print which will be available only to those who show up at each location and present a store coupon that Warp Graphics will provide. In addition, Warp's Marketing Director Cat Kouns is working closely with individual stores to promote the tour on the local level, coordinating national advertising, and making use of Warp's own mailing lists to get dates, times and other tour information directly to die-hard Elfquest fans.

Other scheduled stops include two appearances at Jelly's Comics (Pearl Kai and Honolulu locations) in Hawaii on Saturday, February 13th. From there Team Elfquest roars into March with a three-store sweep through the Southwest, at Stalking Moon Bookstore in Glendale, Arizona on March 12th; Page After Page in Las Vegas, Nevada on March 13th and finally at Golden Apple in Los Angeles, California on the 14th. Further appearances include Moondog's Comics in the suburban Chicago, Illinois area on April 3rd; the Ithacon convention in Ithaca, New York on April 24th and 25th; and several Mile High Comics locations in Denver, Colorado the weekend of June 18th.

Still more tour stops are scheduled or being negotiated. "We're in this crazy boat throughout 1993 - and maybe into 1994 for Elfquest's 'Sweet Sixteen' Anniversary," Richard Pini said. "We'll hit as many areas of the country as we can, while continuing write, draw, coordinate, publish, attend trade shows, and generally to take care of business doing what we love: comics." Updated tour information will appear regularly in comics news publications, as well as in all Elfquest comic books throughout the duration of the tour.

STAR TREK's Walter Koenig Signs With Malibu Comics For New Super-Hero Series

Walter Koenig, the actor best known for his portrayal of Chekov in the *Star Trek* movies and television series, has signed with Malibu Comics to launch his first full color super-hero title, *Raver*, in April 1993. Dan and David Day will illustrate the series.

In *Raver*, the universe is in a state of rapid decay. The few stars that can support life are quickly reaching their population limits. There is a need for the creation of new habitable planets and Norman Walters of Grinnell, Iowa has been chosen as the Johnny Appleseed of new worlds.

"Norman Walters isn't the kind of guy you want to see angry," Koenig said. "He doesn't get mad. He doesn't get even. He just flips out." And when he

flips out, his brain, released from the shackles of normalcy, conceives and creates nightmares that become living, breathing worlds. Filled with evil beings that will destroy for the love of power, for the love of destruction, they are not what was had in mind when Norman was given "the gift," and his superhero alter-ego Raver.

Raver, by famed author/actor/director Koenig, is a story of a man who must enter the lunatic creations of his own twisted mind and set them right. "Norman is no match for the monsters," Koening said, "but Raver can take 'em."

Raver's powers alter to match but never exceed those of his vastly different adversaries. Raver knows that if he fails to conquer each and every foe, he will forever remain a prisoner in one of Norman's mental concoctions--and that Norman would be stuck there with him.

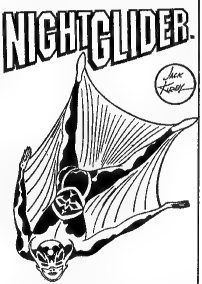
Artists Dan and David Day, whose credits include the recent *SpiderMan/Venom* comic book for Marvel and Unicef, are clearly excited about the project. According to David Day, "It's an honor to work with such a group of talented people as Malibu and Walter. When I was a child dreaming of being a comic book artist, I never thought I'd be working with anyone as great as Walter Koenig. We hope to boldly produce a comic book like no one has ever done before!"

Koenig recreated the character of the Russian navigator Chekov in all *six Star Trek* movies. He has appeared in numerous television shows and stage productions. He has written for several television series and has written four motion picture screenplays with multiple options. Koenig has seen publication with the science-fiction novel *Buck Alice and the Actor-Robot* and the non-fiction journal *Chekov's Enterprise*.

According to editor Roland Mann, "Koenig is the second *Star Trek* alumnus to gravitate towards comics. William Shatner's *TekWar* novels are currently being adapted into comics by Ron Goulart." Mann added that the difference here is that Shatner's comics are adaptations of his novels and that Koenig is creating stories specifically for the comics medium.

Malibu will be offering two different versions of the first issue of *Raver*. The Direct Market Edition will come with an enhanced prism cover while the Newsstand Edition will be the same comic book, but without the enhancement. "Walter Koenig's first comic book is quite an event," Malibu's marketing director Alan J. Payne said. "And we want to market it as such." Additionally, Payne said Malibu will be targeting the numerous *Star Trek* fan clubs and network news organizations to boost awareness of *Raver*.

Topps Comics is proclaiming April, 1993 as "Kirby Month."



Four new Kirby titles encompassing two separate concepts will be introduced -- one based on superheroes and the other a supernatural adventure series.

"The Secret City Saga," Kirby's superhero concept, will be launched in April via three one-shot titles: *Bombast*, *Night Glider* and *Captain Glory*. These superheroes are sole survivors of an ancient civilization destroyed 15,000 years ago. Awakened from suspended animation, they fight to save modern mankind. *Bombast* is plotted by Roy Thomas, scripted by Gary Friedrich, and drawn by Dick Ayers and John Severin. As an added bonus, *Bombast #1* features a special cameo appearance of *The Savage Dragon*, Erik Larsen's Image Comics character.

Nightglider is plotted by Roy Thomas, scripted by Gerry Conway, and drawn by Don Heck. *Captain Glory* is written by Roy Thomas and drawn by Steve Ditko.

April's trilogy of one-shot titles leads to #1 of "The Secret City Saga," an on-going superhero series written by Roy Thomas

and drawn by Steve Ditko, scheduled for release in May. Thomas, a 25-year comics veteran and a former Marvel Comics Editor in Chief, is enjoying the opportunity to work with members of the Bullpen once again. "When Jim Salicrup mentioned this intriguing concept, I didn't need much selling. It's a pleasure working with a bunch of old friends."

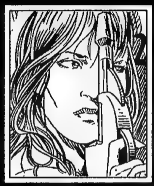
Kirby's supernatural adventure series is *Satan's Six*. The storyline involves a misfit group from different time periods stuck in limbo and determined to make Hell their eternal home. The six characters band together and journey to modern day, seeking to do incredible evil. While their intentions are bad, the results are often quite different. Issue #1 of *Satan's Six* features a cover penciled by Jack Kirby and inked by Todd McFarlane. In addition, the issue features 8-pages of art and script by Jack Kirby himself. The ongoing series is written by veteran writer Tony Isabella and drawn by John Cleary, an exciting new talent.

All the April Kirby titles will be polybagged with exclusive Topps Comics trading cards. The art on these cards will be provided by some of the hottest talents in the field. A comprehensive marketing, advertising and promotional campaign will support "Kirby Month." Special incentives and value-added Kirby collectibles will be offered to participating retailers and consumers. Complete details will be announced shortly.

"Everyone's asking me if Topps Comics is interested in creator-owned projects" said Editor in Chief, Jim Salicrup. "The answer's obviously yes, and I can't think of a talent more deserving of a creator-owned deal than Jack Kirby. We couldn't be more excited about bringing his unique visions to '90s comics fans."

BLOOD & ROSES
Jerry Smith, Gene Gonzalez and Bob Hickey

THE SEEKER
Joe Martin, Willie Peppers and Allen Freeman



MORGANA X
Quinton Hoover and Allen Freeman

THIS SUMMER.
SKY COMICS.

FEMALE TROUBLE

SEEKER

SEEKER: VENGEANCE #1 JULY '93
Joe Martin \ Willie Peppers \ Allen Freeman

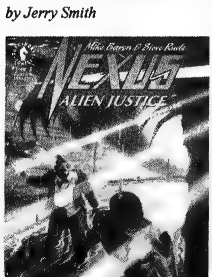
Sky

MORGANA X

MORGANA X SPECIAL #1 JUNE '93
Quinton Hoover \ Allen Freeman

COMICS NOW

by Jerry Smith



The greatest comic book no longer being published is now the greatest comic book currently being published. *Nexus* is back. If possible, it's even better than it was.

Dark Horse Comics has rescued *Nexus* from the defunct First Comics and paired the original creative team of Mike Baron and Steve Rude to once again take control.

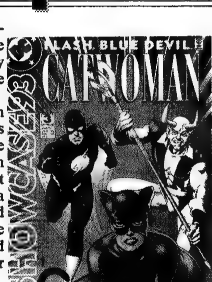
This book moves like a well-oiled machine

Nexus: Alien Justice could possibly be the beginning of the most satisfying *Nexus* story ever told. The Baron/Rude team is rested and ready to tell their story. Or rather, the story of Horatio Hellpop, Nexus. Hellpop dreams of mass murderers, and when he awakens, he is compelled to seek out and execute them. As the premise goes, he is given almost unlimited power to carry out his mandate by the mysterious alien, the Merk. Trouble is, the Merk isn't exactly stable. Horatio has reigned in the Merk's eccentricities in times past, but the old boy seems to have finally lost it in this three issue miniseries.

Things begin to unravel when Horatio decides to go with his friend Dave to visit Dave's home planet, Thune. Dave hasn't been to Thune for several years, not since Horatio saved him from a fascist government that had taken over the planet. Dave heard things were better and wanted to go there to search for his missing wife. However, things there were not better.

On Thune, Horatio and Dave discover an evil industrialist interested only in exploiting Thune and its people. What's worse, in the middle of trying to put things right, the Merk cuts off Horatio's power for no discernable reason. They succeed in their mission to stop the industrialist, but on return to their home planet of Ylum (pronounced EYE-lum), the Merk declares he has chosen a new Nexus. Horatio, in his eyes, is no longer an "employee". It remains to be seen whether or not Horatio will be able to control the Merk's latest experiment.

Mike Baron and Steve Rude are an example of a perfect blend of writer and artist. This book moves like a well-oiled machine, from Baron's terse, snappy dialog to Rude's painstakingly detailed artwork. A better team has never graced the comic page. This book receives my highest recommendation. It's a character study, it's science fiction, it's superheroes, and it's a well-told, exciting story.



It's a bit of a letdown then, to go on to DC's new *Showcase '93* book. This comic is an example of everything that is and has always been wrong with DC. If a company is going to do an anthology book with bad stories, they should feature their most popular characters, as Marvel does. At least then, fans who like those characters will buy the book and give it a fighting chance.

Instead, this book features second-stringers like Catwoman, Blue Devil and Cyborg. I like Catwoman and Cyborg well enough (although I have never understood the allure of a stuntman stuck in a movie costume, i.e. Blue Devil. If he's such a hot-shot stuntman, why can't he get out of his wardrobe?), but I don't think they can carry an entire comic book by themselves.

The Catwoman story, by Doug Moench and Ed Hannigan, is neither's best work. Perhaps I just can't warm up to this new Catwoman, the thief/prostitute with a heart o' gold,

Future "Must Reads":
1) *X-Men Unlimited #1*

2) *Incredible Hulk #406*
3) *Legionnaires #3*
4) *Adventures of Superman #500*

5) *Turok #1*
6) *Sparkplug #2*
7) *Predator: Race War #3*
8) *The Mighty Magnor #1*
9) *Tribe #1*
10) *The Maxx #1*

but I've read this story a million times, most of them in Moench's previous work.

The only memorable detail of the Blue Devil story, by Gary Cohn, Dan Mishkin and Pete Moriarty, is that guest star Guy Gardner's power ring is drawn incorrectly. No longer a member of the Green Lantern Corps, Guy's yellow ring is drawn in the shape of a Lantern, instead of round as it should be. I can't believe no one noticed this, it's sloppy editing.

The Cyborg story, by Len Wein and Phil Jimenez, is better, but I'm not sure of the point. Cyborg, always a bittersweet character, regains his mind and memory, only to lose it again at the end of this ten page story. Why bother? It's a well-told, well-drawn tale, but how much heartbreak can one character take? Give Cyborg a break.

This comic is not going to survive without some major shake-ups

This comic is not going to survive without some major shake-ups. For starters, DC should anchor the book with a story each issue about a hip, happening character. Think hot. Think G'Nort. Feature Batman, feature the Flash, feature Green Lantern. Run a "Tales of Superman When He was Alive" story every month. Sell the book with a major character, then fill it out with second-stringers. Marvel does it with Wolverine in *Marvel Comics Presents*, DC should do it in *Showcase*. This book has potential to be good, I'd like to see it reach that potential. One thing is for sure, Blue Devil is not the character to insure the survival of an anthology series.

This is not to say that DC doesn't have its share of dynamite titles. One of its best is *Hawkworld*, written by John Ostrander. Although the book will soon be cancelled and resurrected as just plain *Hawkman*, Ostrander, with artist Tim Truman, goes out with a bang in *Hawkworld* #32.

This book is about so much more than police from another planet, which is what Katar Hol and Shayera, Hawkman and Hawkwoman, are. Ostrander has explored the concept of freedom, inalienable rights, justice, racism, love, and friendship, all within the framework of a science fiction/adventure story. I'll never forget Katar's reaction when he first read the Constitution of the United States of America. It's effect on him was moving and stirring. Imagine, an alien from a repressive, stifiling culture exposed to radical ideas of freedom and justice for all. It made the reader think about how truly sublime are the ideals upon which this country was founded.

In the last issue of *Hawkworld*, #32, the end finds Hawkwoman apparently dead and Hawkman possibly so. All we know is that they fought a massive battle and won, and we readers have to wait until the refurbished *Hawkman #1* to see who lives and who dies. And if Shayera should not survive the events of *Hawkworld #32*, Mr. Ostrander will have at least one maddened, infuriated reader on his hands. I hope you're listening, Mr. Ostrander.

SOMETIMES IT JUST SNEAKS UP ON YOU!

That's exactly what happened here!

With the debut of his all-new *Murciélaga She-Bat*, dynamic artist Daerick Gröss has created a sudden sensation! Copies of *She-Bat* #2 sold out at virtually every location within hours of going on sale! And copies of the rare, hard-to-find first issue are already being marked up to $10 and more!

Because you didn't know it was going to happen, you have a very good excuse for not having enough copies on hand.

But you have *no* excuse now.

The problem *right now* is that you had to place your orders for comic books shipping in March *before* you could see what was happening with *Murciélaga*. And that meant you *couldn't possibly* know how many copies to order for the start of Daerick Gröss's eight-part introductory *Reiki Warriors* saga!

Now, because it's only a matter of weeks before we go to press, there isn't time to go through normal distribution channels. In order to make sure enough copies are printed, we have to go *directly* to you! And you need to tell us quickly how many *more* copies of the first three chapters of Daerick Gröss's *Reiki Warriors* octology you need to have in your store.

Chapter One appears in LEAGUE OF CHAMPIONS #11, featuring the return of Daerick Gröss's ultimate martial warrior, *Mister No!* and each copy of this deluxe-format comic book will be polybagged with a *Mister No* rookie trading card!

Chapter Two appears in SPARKPLUG #2, featuring *Murciélaga She-Bat* herself! Each copy of this deluxe-format comic book will be polybagged with a *Murciélaga She-Bat* rookie trading card!

Chapter Three appears in ROSE #3, featuring the return of *Soliloquy Jones*, the streetsmart ace detective with the computer-like mind. Each copy of this deluxe-format comic book will be polybagged with a *Soliloquy Jones* rookie trading card!

Advance orders for single copies of these *deluxe-format* comic books are available at the cover price of $3.95 each, plus $1.00 for postage and handling. Payment must accompany your order.

Quantity discounts are available for purchases in multiples of ten copies, at $19.75 postpaid. Again, payment must accompany your order.

We emphatically *do not* have any intention of competing with either our distributors or our retailers. We're dealing direct, bypassing normal distribution channels *only* because of the unique nature of this situation, in which, because of the timing of the original solicitation, several extremely hot comic books would not otherwise be available to most comic book fans.

So please, in light of the *enormous* interest that has suddenly developed in these new comic books from Daerick Gröss and Heroic Publishing, let us know *before March 5* how many copies of each of these three issues *you* are going to need.

REIKI warriors

Name: _____

Address: _____

___ sets of 10 copies of LEAGUE OF CHAMPIONS #11 at $19.75 each.

___ sets of 10 copies of SPARKPLUG #2 at $19.75 each.

___ sets of 10 copies of ROSE #3 at $19.75 each.

I also need:

___ single copies of LEAGUE OF CHAMPIONS #11 at $3.95 each.

___ single copies of SPARKPLUG #2 at $3.95 each.

___ single copies of ROSE #3 at $3.95 each.

Send check or money order *only* with your order *before March 5* to: HEROIC PUBLISHING INC., 6433 California Ave., Long Beach CA 90805. For single copy purchases, please add $1 postage and handling.

MURCIÉLAGA SHE-BAT™

WATCH FOR THE ORIGIN OF MURCIELEGA SHE-BAT! In the all-new third issue, on sale in May, *by Daerick Gröss, Martin Powell, and Stateman!*

PREVIEW

RATMAN: Field of Blood
Comico Publishing
by Willingham, Herman, McQuain and Trais

BRIT BITS

News and gossip from across the ocean by Paul H.Birch

Bryan Talbot's multi-Eagle award winning graphic novel series, *The Adventures of Luther Arkwright* is appearing in the European anthology *Europa* published by Telemaco. Bryan also comments, "I'm hoping this Dark Horse edition, putting all the books in one volume in color is going to come out in '93." The creator will supply color guides for Dark Horse's computerized colouring system. "I'm slowly working on a sequel," he adds, "But I'd like it to be very different and stand on its own. It'll mainly be about Arkwright's daughter".

If you're into gaming, The Luther Arkwright Roleplaying Game from 23rd Parallel Games contains a hefty-sized rule book, with new scenarios to be published regularly, featuring brand new covers by Bryan.

Mark Buckingham can't promise that *Miracleman: The Silver Age* is going to come out any faster than *The Golden Age* - not his fault - but reveals "It's going to be Young Miracleman's psyche, and we'll see that Miracleman's desire to have his young friend reborn was probably a rather selfish move." So far the feedback on the new series has been positive, "There's a lot more action going on in these stories but it was a natural development that the book was always planned to take." Concerning Young Miracleman's look, Mark says went back to Captain Marvel Junior as a source point, "Especially the Mac Raboy interpretation, that really made the thing move for me."

Except for Chris Bachalo's pencils on *Shade, the Changing Man*, Mark hopes to cut down on his inking work and develop his pencilling further, and although there's nothing specific as yet, he'll probably be doing fill-in pencils on the Vertigo line.

Anyone wanting to keep tracks on the Marvel UK universe should pick up the Dan Abnett/ Bryan Hitch mini-series, *Mys-TECH Wars* as it crosses over with the regular UK titles, plus guesting US characters. A spin-off book is planned for later in '93 to be written by Steve Parkhouse.

'Heroswarm' is the grouping title for Marvel UK's new characters, many under the editorial co-ordination of Michael Bennent, who told me, "Some may integrate with *Mys-TECH*, others won't." One that probably won't is *Wild Thing*, concerning virtual reality and to be illustrated by Dark Horse International's Accident Man, Duke Mighten, and written by Simon Jowett, who's also doing work for Dark Horse, namely two James Bond series; the first illustrated by John M. Burns, the second by Davids Lloyd and Jackson.

Other titles from Marvel UK? There's Death Rattle's a prototype to the Minion robot that became Death's Head II and will be around late end of the year, as will a mini-series featuring an even better version called Death Metal - personally I'm little unsure if Marvel can copyright these names - *Blood Seed* by Paul Neary and Liam Sharp is "Sword and sorcery set against new wave British nastiness!", there's also *Gene Machine, Shadow Riders, Blackaxe, Gunrunner, Plasmer* and a bunch of others. They're cranking them out and and although most are miniseries, if they sell well look for them to be going straight ahead as ongoing books.

There's a big worry that although they're scheduled, not all have creative teams set up as yet, but one that does is *Super Soldiers* to be written by Bennent and illustrated by Andrew Currie, who may be familiar to US readers from last year's *Iron Man Annual* and the *Stormwatcher* miniseries from Acme/Eclipse.

Continuity freaks will recall the US super soldier program that created Captain America was put to rest after the Nuke fiasco with Daredevil, we Brit's also cancelled similar experiments, putting Joseph, a successful result from the program, into cryogenic sleep - of course he wakes up, otherwise we'd be looking at some pretty static visuals in the book!

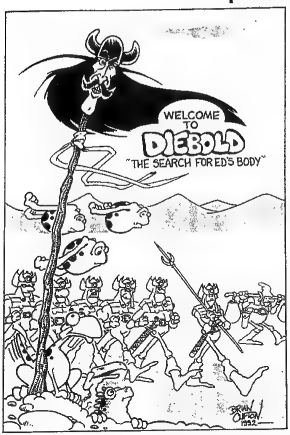
Currie's also done some extremely lively pencils for an Axel

Pressbutton strip to be published by Atomeka/Tundra UK, scripted by its creator, Pedro Henry. "I'm also doing a Conan portfolio" he tells me, which should be good practice for Pat Mills' *Witch*, due as a five issue series late in the year from Epic. For those not long in the tooth, this was originally to be illustrated by *Hellblazer* cover artist, Glenn Fabry, and indeed an earlier incarnation, *Scatha* by Mills and Fabry, ran in a short-lived British newspaper some years back.

There are even more Marvel UK miniseries planned; one such that's not scheduled and without a title at the time of writing is by *Motormouth* and *Killpower* scripter, Graham Marks, and to be illustrated by Richard Elson. Rich' has worked for *2000AD*, *Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles* (due to some ludicrous events in the '70s during the Kung-Fu craze, we Brits aren't allowed to use the word 'Ninja' in reference to anything that might be seen by children. Go figure!) *The Eagle* and other comics, but he's currently doing assorted pieces for Marvel UK, including a *Death's Head* strip, covers such a regular stint on *The Exploits of Spider-Man*, plus this new series. Sources tell me it might feature "heavy sexual undertones", but all Elson will offer is, "It'll probably be more off the wall than the other series, the way editor, Tim Quinn sees it", as an explanation, further describing his visual intentions for it as being "To make it interesting, powerful and striking." Yes, but what's the title? Maybe we'll know next time.

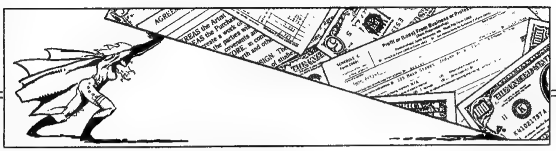
PREVIEW

DIEBOLD
Conquest Press
by Holland and Clifton



WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT? HAVEN'T YOU EVER SEEN A HEAD ON A POST BEFORE? SO, I CAN TALK! BIG DEAL! I USED TO BE PRETTY GOOD AT CARDS TOO... YOU CAN SEE WHERE THAT GOT ME!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? WHAT DO YOU WANT? YOU WANT TO COME INSIDE? YOU MUST BE CRAZY! WELL, I KNOW YOU'RE CRAZY FOR THE WAY YOU'RE DRESSED... THIS JOKE CONFIRMS IT.
OKAY, OKAY, IT'S NOT MY FUNERAL. GEEZ, YOU TRY TO HELP SOME PEOPLE AND WHAT DOES IT GET YOU? MY DEAR OLD MOTHER WARNED ME ABOUT PEOPLE LIKE YOU. STILL, IT'S NO SKIN OFF MY NOSE, WHICH I CAN ASSURE YOU I CAN'T AFFORD.
HEY, TELL YOUR FRIEND TO GET HIS FINGER OUT OF HIS NOSE... WHAT'S HE DOING, DIGGING FOR GOLD? AH, HA, HA OH, IS HE GOING TO CRY NOW? BABY!

I 'MEMBER OL' KING GOG AN' THAT WINTER - HEY! LOOK IT WAS - HEY! YESTERDAY.
WE WAS ALL FROZEN AN' STIFF ON THE SIDE OF WASTELESS HAMMER WHAT ARE YOU? BUTTERFINGERS!
WHAT THE ---
YOU LITTLE BUTTERBALL! YOU BETTER TELL YOUR BIG UGLY FRIEND HERE IF HE DROPS ME I'LL DROP KICK HIM ACROSS WASTELESS, IN IT DON'T MATTER IF I DON'T HAVE LEGS TO DO IT!
HE WOULDN'T DROP YOU, MR. ED. CAMPBELL WAS JUST HAVIN' A LITTLE TROUBLE.
HEY, BUTTERBALL, TELL YOUR UGLY BUDDY THERE'S A DOLLAR IN IT IF HE STEPS ON THAT PARKING LIZARD!
CAMPBELL WOULDN'T DO THAT, MR. ED. HE LIKES JUNIPER. AN' JUNIPER LIKES YOU!



Getting Into The BUSINESS Of Comics

by Lurene Haines

Part 2: Preparing A Professional Portfolio

Last month I described a few methods for getting started on the road to becoming a professional in the comic industry. This time we're going to look at an important and very concrete step on that road: preparing a professional portfolio.

Just What Is A 'Portfolio'?

A portfolio is an organized display of samples of work, published and/or unpublished.

For artists, there are a variety of professional portfolio cases available from art or office supply shops. However, it can take the form of an ordinary binder with page inserts, a scrapbook with copies and originals mounted on the pages, or even a neatly organized sketchbook. The pages can be displayed in loose form, but it is recommended that they be anchored and protected for safety's sake, particularly in the case of original art. The most important aspect being that the work is organized and easy to examine.

For writers, it is important that their written work is brief, concise examples of their writing. A portfolio is not as important for a writer as samples, which I will discuss later in this column.

Why Do I Need One?

Many aspiring professionals - and sometimes even established pros - come to conventions, or approach publishers and editors, with a set of loose originals or samples in hand hoping to find work by showing their 'wares'. Sometimes they are just looking for critiques. Unfortunately, this method is often one reason these individuals are unable to get work. To an interested editor or publisher, this disorganized rag-tag collection of work represents an inexperienced and unprofessional employee. It would be the same as showing up for a butcher's job with a bag full of miscellaneous pieces of steaks and chops from the last job or practice - pretty weird, and not too impressive.

By taking the simple first step of organizing your work into an easy-to-scan, eye-pleasing display, you make it effortless for potential employers to examine your work and also prove your ability to be organized and professional.

There are a variety of methods for presenting your work, and several different ways that the you can use this portfolio to promote yourself. But one thing is certain; if you are serious about acquiring professional employment then you must *prepare a portfolio right away*. Not later, when you've completed some dreamed of volume or type of work - you'll never achieve it in time, and you'll always be procrastinating. Not after you've reached the level of satisfaction with your work for which you ultimately aim - that's a distant, ever-changing goal you should always be reaching for. Do it now. Right now.

If you feel your work isn't satisfactory, then now is not the time to approach employers. Continue your education or practicing. When you're more satisfied, then prepare your portfolio, and search for employ. Publishers don't hire aspiring professionals on spec, counting on them developing into some massive talent in the distant future. There are lots of other pros out there to choose from, employers want to see what you can do **now**.

What Do I Do?

1. Do The Work

Before you can prepare your portfolio, you must first do the work. That may sound

simplistic, or obvious, but often professionals are approached by a wanna-be who assures us that they 'have work at home', or that 'the idea is all worked out'. Ultimately they have nothing concrete to show. You must have finished work before you can expect to interest an employer. Or get a professional critique. Only a well-established, proven professional can sell work 'on spec'. Individuals just getting started need to prove themselves first, and that means doing the work.

There are many ways to display your work, depending on a few factors. Some things to consider are; your finances, size and weight of originals, value of originals, your choice of display method, type of work you do, etc. The list can go on and on. Make your own list, and once you have itemized the characteristics and limitations then select the method you wish to use for display.

2. Choose A Portfolio Type

As I mentioned earlier, there are a variety of portfolio types available. Using your list of characterizations and limitations, you should make a choice on which type of portfolio will best suit your needs.

If you plan to travel to many shows and interviews, something very portable is best. Particularly if you will be flying, consider that it must meet the carry-on luggage requirements. Don't check you portfolio if you can avoid it! There's nothing worse than spending time and money to go to a show or interview looking for work, only to discover that you have no samples to show because Joe Winter's ski pole pierced and tore them, or that they've been rerouted on a tour of the Orient without you!

Make sure it's reasonably light-weight, too. You'll have to haul it back and forth from car, to home, to hotel, to airport, and through long, long airport concourses. No need to show up with your beautiful samples, if the prospective employer can't tear their eyes off your arm looped and piled on the floor because your ten-ton portfolio has turned you into the amazing Elasto!

Consider the display method, too. Some people choose to display their work matted and shrink wrapped. It looks really great, but can be unwieldy. One of the easiest forms is in the binder or portfolio case. Plastic, perforated pages with a sheet of black paper inside. This provides a double-faced page, and a good black setting on which to display your work. It also adds protection.

Most importantly, it makes perusal of your samples effortless - as simple as turning the pages of a book. If you can keep the overall dimensions down to 11" X 17", that will make it even easier for an interested party to set it on the table in front of them or hold in their lap. And if they're not juggling loose pages, struggling to protect their tabletop or hold up an oversized portfolio, they'll be more inclined to spend some time examining your work.

3. Make copies

Many people place great value on their creations - whether dollar or sentimental - and it only makes sense to protect that value by displaying copies of your work. If only a copy is destroyed, damaged, or (heavens forbid, but it happens) stolen, the cost and emotional trauma is much less than if it were the irreplaceable original.

Copies take a variety of forms. If you work in black and white, then a simple, inexpensive (and clean!) photocopy is suitable to display your work. Full size (11" X 17") copies will easily hold a full size page of comic art. Reductions to letter size (8 1/2" X 11") will provide a more portable sample, and will clearly show how the art will look in comic reproduction.

Color copies are a little more complicated, but valuable if you want to pursue work as a colorist, or for fully-painted material (Just remember, that professionals like to see the original drawings as well as the finished painted samples!) To make color copies, you can use photography, expensive color printing, or thanks to our ever-improving technology, color photocopies. These types of reproductions are a bit more expensive than the black and white. Costs vary depending on equipment availability and the economics of your area. Often you can make an excellent quality color reproduction, however sometimes the match is poor. In those cases consider alternatives because a poor sample makes you look bad - and apologies and explanations to the prospective employer doesn't improve their perception of the work. Just don't display bad samples.

4. Display originals

If you're brave, or your originals aren't too important to you, or you are continuously creating new work to replace the old, or if you can't get a good reproduction, or time is very short, then display the original. There are a couple of very important considerations here; portability and protection. If you like to work on 4' X 4' X 3/8" masonite, then there is not much chance you can fit that in a portfolio, let alone carry it around easily. Then again, because of its large size, your only reasonable source of copies would be a photograph. On the other hand, if you work on paper or bristol that is 11" X 17" or smaller then you can very easily display the original art. It is light-weight, and will easily fit in a standard display folder.

If you make the choice to display originals, then the most important thing to consider is protection. Now this isn't just for you, but also for the recipient of your portfolio.

Here's a scenario; you've approached a pro to check out your stuff. While looking at your unprotected work, a big, unexpected wet sneeze overcomes them. This isn't

ProFiles

Professional: Dave Dorman, Illustrator
Credits Include: The Greatest Batman Stories Ever Told, D.C. Comics; Aliens:Tribes Graphic Album; Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom series; Star Wars:Dark Empire series - all from Dark Horse Publishing
Current Projects: Aliens:Tribes sequel; Predator:Race War; Star Wars:Dark Empire sequel - all from Dark Horse; Batman:Seduction of the Gun, D.C. Comics; The Edge (Creator Owned) for A1/Atomika Press
Question: How do you use your portfolio, sample sheets and business cards?

A portfolio is an easy way to show your potential client the style and variety of work you can do.

I try to include a variety of new pieces mixed with strong, familiar work. However, I try to tailor samples to the publisher I'm approaching. That's really important. I don't normally show horror samples to the superhero publishers! I try to keep my portfolio to a reasonable size. No point in overwhelming your potential employer. It's best to get in, do your business and get out.

I personally prefer to show high quality copies or printed samples in my portfolio. No originals. They're fragile and sometimes unwieldy and I'm concerned about damage, since they're valuable to me.

Business cards and sample sheets are very important since they're easy to leave with a potential client, whether they've see my portfolio or not, and they're very simple for the publisher to keep readily on file.

Edge is a character created by Dorman. This art will appear in a short story in the **A1** anthology from Atomika Press. Dorman is also planning an illustrated novel featuring his character.

going to help your originals look better, and the inadvertent victim is going to feel like chopped jerk for damaging your work -and probably will be a bit resentful. I know, I know, that sounds ridiculous! But guilt is an insidious thing, and they may feel that you put them on the spot to look at your work, and that your lack of professional presentation made them responsible for the damage.

Some pros won't even examine unprotected originals, for just this sort of reason. Spend a little extra time and a few dollars. Plastic page protectors are pretty inexpensive - at the very least invest in them for your originals.

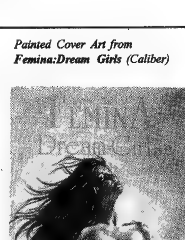
5. Tearsheets and Published Work

There are some aspiring professionals who have managed to get something published. Sometimes it's not much, a small company might have published it - even one now out of business - but published samples are an excellent inclusion in your portfolio. If they're good. If it's a far cry from your usual caliber of work, mention the credit in your résumé or coverletter, but don't display the work unless the prospective employer asks specifically to see it. If the publisher did a hatchet job in reproducing the work, display it with good, clean copies of the originals alongside so that a comparison can be made.

Published samples are very useful. They indicate to a potential employer that you've made the effort to get work in the past and completed the assignment to that publisher's satisfaction. Granted the experience may not have been a good one - with problems getting paid by the publisher, meeting your deadline, or even getting your original artwork returned - but it helps provide the appearance of professionalism on your part. Make the best of a bad experience. Make it work to your benefit in the future.

Interior Painted Page from ***Hellraiser*** *(Epic)*

Painted Cover Art from ***Femina:Dream Girls*** *(Caliber)*



Examples of Published Samples/Tearsheets

Your Portfolio Format

Now that you've decided what type of work to show, it's important that you carefully choose the format for display. For this section, I will use a standard book-style portfolio case, with 2-sided plastic pages for the example.

1. Selecting Work To Display

The most important things to remember when choosing portfolio material is; **ALWAYS**

DISPLAY YOUR BEST AND MOST CURRENT WORK!!! I emphasize this point because without fail, at every show or appearance, pros are approached by numerous aspiring creators who qualify their work with "This isn't my best stuff" or "This is older work, I'm much better now." My response is always a gentle "Then why don't you display your best, current stuff?" The reason is, they generally don't have anything else.

I've heard about a creator who got many of his jobs based on a portfolio that contained good work he had done in high school - at least ten years ago. He scored a few professional jobs based on the portfolio before word got around that he was unable to deliver that same quality of work. The portfolio doesn't fool anyone anymore, and his new published credits aren't much of a selling point. Now he has a hard time getting work on his own merit.

The second most important thing to remember; **NEVER MAKE EXCUSES FOR YOUR WORK!!** There is no excuse. No really, there isn't. If your stuff is good, it's good, and you have a chance. If it isn't then you won't get hired. Don't apologize or make excuses. Every pro's heard them a dozen times before, in infinite variations. The didn't care about them before, and they don't care about them now. They only want to see what you've got to show them. Right. This. Minute. Offer descriptions if you wish, or describe new work your currently doing, but don't discredit the work you're displaying. You're only giving yourself bad PR, and it sounds really unprofessional.

Your rule of thumb should be; let the work speak for itself.

2. Choosing The Amount Of Work To Display

There is no set figure for what is too much or too little.

Some creators are very quick and prolific, and have a great deal of good work to choose from. Some are much slower and meticulous, and have fewer pieces to show. Whatever your case, make sure to select the best that you have to offer.

Keep in mind portability when you decide how much to display. As a guide, you should consider between three and five double-sided pages. This will allow you to show 6 to 10 of your best pieces of work. Feel free to increase that slightly, but don't go overboard. If all your work looks the same, a prospective employer is going to get tired of it after ten to twelve pages.

3. Determining The Type of Work To Show

The type of work you actively seek should decide the type of work samples you display in your portfolio. If you're interested in superheros, don't display funny animal work. If you're looking for work in the alternative, horror, or science fiction comics, then don't show superhero samples.

The same holds true for which companies you approach. If you just love Marvel's characters then DON'T show that company samples featuring D.C. Comics characters! Big corporations consider employee loyalty an important factor. If it appears, even superficially, that you could be tempted away by another company down the road, that will curb their interest. But more importantly, they want to see how you would handle THEIR characters, since that's what they would be hiring you to draw.

So tailor your portfolio to your audience. If your attending a convention with representatives from more than one company, then feel free to mix and match your display. They will understand.

On a related line of thought, display the type of work you want to do. Don't show color samples, if all you're interested in is pencilling. Also, if you pencil great, but you like to ink your work, though your inking needs practice, then display a copy of the finished pencils alongside the finished inks. Give a potential employer the opportunity to hire you based on your abilities, not just your dreams. Who knows? They may hate your inks, but go nuts for the pencil work! I've seen it happen before.

4. Your Portfolio Layout

Although there's no set layout, here is a reasonable guide to get you started:

- make sure you permanently mark your name, address and phone number somewhere in your portfolio, in case of loss or theft. I've been left with sketchbooks that were forgotten, and had no I.D. inside. Fortunately I tracked down the owner. We're not always that lucky.

- start your first page with a striking piece of work. There is an effect studied in

psychology called the primacy-recency effect. It simply says that people can remember the first thing and most recent thing they've seen easiest. Start and finish your portfolio with strong pieces. Chances are those will be what the prospective employer remembers. It's also not a bad idea to have a business card or small sign, prominently featuring your name and phone number, on that front page. Get that subconscious image planted in the their mind.

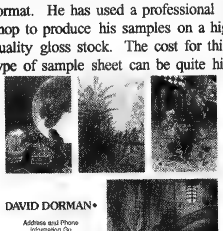
- try to find some form of organization for the interior pieces; chronological order, character groupings, color and black&white groups, etc. This makes it a bit easier for the prospective employer to look through. And remember.

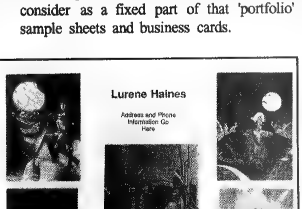
- try to finish with another really strong piece. Remember that primacy-recency effect! You might want to include another card or sign with your name and phone number on it. Make sure these have clear bold lettering on them. You want to be remembered.

Little 'Extras' That Can Help

Now that we've got a professional portfolio all laid out and ready to show, there are a couple of things that you should seriously consider as a fixed part of that 'portfolio' - sample sheets and business cards.

Dorman's sample sheet features a vertical format. He has used a professional print shop to produce his samples on a high quality gloss stock. The cost for this type of sample sheet can be quite high.





My sample sheet is a simple color photocopy, using photographs for the originals. Although the quality of reproduction is not quite as good as Dorman's, it allows me an inexpensive way to constantly update

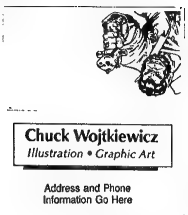
Sample Sheets

Sample sheets are reproductions of your artwork, with your name, address and phone number included. It gives you the opportunity to pass on a permanent copy of work from your portfolio to a prospective employer. These are suitable for individuals who have examined your work, and for those that haven't got time or won't be available when you're able to meet with them. In future columns we'll also discuss their use in contacting potential employers by mail.

Artist sample sheets can take the form of photographs, color copies, professionally printed pages and large cards, or good black and white copies on lightweight cardstock.

For writers, sample sheets are one form of 'portfolio'. Copies of script pages, prose work, or story proposals can be attached to your contact information. This is ideal to leave with a prospective client.

One thing to keep in mind, for both artists and writers, make sure you have a good supply of sample sheets on hand. Don't use your last sheet, only to discover that the next person would have been an invaluable contact that you've missed out on. Frequently you can get a price break on volume copying, too.



· Artist **Chuck Wojtkiewicz** (pronounced Voyt-kev-itch) made a two-sided, top-fold business card. He put his contact information on the outside front and a gorgeous sample of his work on the inside, making a sort of mini-sample sheet.

· Chuck's work can be seen in **The Jaguar** and **Crusaders** from the D.C. Comics-Impact! line.

Business Cards

No matter how unimportant business cards may seem, they are invaluable, and fairly inexpensive for simple black and whites. Again, you can usually get a price break if you order larger amounts.

Business cards are indispensable. Keep a few in your pockets and wallet or bag. Slip extras into your portfolio. Always keep them handy.

When you meet a prospective employer, or another professional, you speak volumes about your level of professionalism and business acumen if you can say "Oh, here's my card."

Always hand a card to any prospect that looks at your portfolio. Include one when you hand out your sample sheets. For artists, use the business card as an opportunity to showcase your work. It's almost like a little billboard! People like to look at business card art. Make yours stand out, and they'll remember you.

Writers, don't think it won't help you, too! A good friend of mine, and aspiring prose writer, finally took my advice and had some really nice cards made up before attending a large convention. He was stunned by the response, and said he couldn't understand why he'd waited so long. He made some excellent work connections - and even got a few lunch invites from editors!

Tying It Together

You now know just what a portfolio is, and why it is important in your search for employment. Just remember to keep in mind all the different factors when preparing a professional portfolio. You must **choose the type of portfolio** display case best suited to your needs, decide whether you will **use copies or originals** in your display, include **tearsheets** or any copies of **published work** you may have done, carefully **select the right genre** of work to display (ie., superhero vs. horror), decide the **number of pages** you will show, what **type of work** you want to get (ie. pencilling vs. painted), **select a layout** that most impressively displays your work. And finally, don't forget **sample sheets and business cards**, those little extras that show your professionalism, and give you the edge over the other newcomers.

Next month we'll cover **Approaching Potential Employers - Part 1**. Well cover attending conventions, getting pro feedback and making introductions. Right now get your portfolio organized, and provide yourself with another invaluable tool for achieving your goal of *Getting Into The Business Of Comics*.

Glossary of Terms

tearsheet - a copy of published work

originals - the original artwork or typed pages produced by a creator

PR - public relations

spec, 'on spec' - short for speculation or on speculation. Sometimes jobs are obtained based on the 'speculation' of the publisher. Ie., they speculate that taking on the project or creator will be profitable in the future.

If you have questions about the topics covered in this column, please feel free to write. I will try to address your questions in the column or by a personal note. Send your letters to **Lurene Haines, c/o Comics Arena Magazine, 264 Main St., Florence, KY 41042.**

A Conversation With ... Jim Shooter

Interview by Jerry Smith

A household name in modern comics, Jim Shooter has a colorful history with several comics companies. He has written for DC, was editor in chief of Marvel Comics for years, started Valiant in 1989, and recently split from Valiant to form his own company with his own original characters. Here's what he told *Arena Magazine*:

Arena Magazine: What caused the recent split between yourself and Valiant?

Jim Shooter: There was a disagreement among the owners [of Valiant]. The other owners, who were all bankers, people you never heard of, wanted to sell the company. It involved a lot of things that were not good for me. Someone else would have come in to run the company, I would have had to sign a ten year employment contract ... I really couldn't do it. As a result of this agreement, since I was the president of the company, I was in a position to prevent the sale. The only way they could go through with it was to get rid of me. Now whether they were or not I don't know, I assume that's gonna ... they don't tell me anymore.

AM: I see.

Shooter: So at any rate, I left over that. It had nothing to do with the work on the books.

AM: So it had nothing to do with editorial direction or anything like that? It seemed to be going fine.

Shooter: It was! But obviously the people who run the place now, that's the story they're going to tell. They're going to try to make these people put up a smoke screen. I guess you'd expect that.

AM: That's what I got from the letter columns of [Valiant's comics after Shooter left the company]. Have you read any of the books since you left?

Shooter: I read one or two that David Lapham gave me because they were the first ones he'd written and he wanted me to critique them for him, which I did. It was a little tough.

AM: The transition seems to be a little weak.

Shooter: Well, I can't ... like I said, I haven't read any of them because ... I don't know, I just don't want to. I did read the couple that David did and they seemed pretty good.

this time it'll go a lot better

AM: What's next for Jim Shooter?

Shooter: Well, right now I'm raising money, I'm going to start a new comic book company. I wasn't able to do that until October 18 because they had me on a non-compete clause in my old contract. But as of October 18 I've started trying to raise money, and I believe I'm very close.

AM: Licensed characters or original Jim Shooter characters?

Shooter: Original characters, and probably a "universe" again, an action/adventure superhero universe. And this time, better. I have a lot more resources, a lot more people to start with this time. A lot of people called me up [when they heard of the split with Valiant] and said, "Well Jim, when do we start?"

AM: You put your heart and soul into the *Legion [of Superheroes]*, then *Star Brand* was excellent, then you started the Valiant Universe. Do you have any ideas how you can top that? I suppose you can always have new ideas, but do you have anything in mind right now?

Shooter: Well, a lot of people are going to raise eyebrows at this, but ideas are the least of it. Every person in this room has more than enough ideas. It's what you do with them. It's how you make them come to fruition. If you look at Spider-Man, for instance. Was it high concept that made Spider-Man? I don't think so. I think it was because Stan [Lee] and Steve [Ditko] did such a unique take on it. If DC had done it and the wrong people had done it, it might have been another Green Arrow-type thing: here's the Spider-signal, let's get in the Spider-mobile ...

AM: (Laughter)

Shooter: You know, it could have been, because that was the rut they were in back then, and it took Marvel coming along to shake them out of it. So no, I think that it's a matter of care in the execution and having the skills to bring it to fruition. I look back at all the stuff I did before and none of it was as good on paper as it was in my mind. I was always compromised for some reason or another. Some of it was my fault, some of it just the system, some of it because it had to be done in a hurry. Or, in the case of the whole New Universe, they pulled our budget. It was done by volunteer labor. Whoever was willing to stay after work was working on the New Universe. I always had problems, you know? This time, I think I've finally worked ... I've done the shakedown crews, I've worked all the bugs out, I think this time it'll go a lot better.

This "chat" was conducted at the Mid-Ohio Comic Convention in November 1992.

Industry News

Black Publishers Unite

In what might be the most significant event in the comic book industry, innovative publishers of black comic books have come together under one name: ANIA.

ACB Comics, UP Comics, Dark Zulu Lies, Africa Rising Comics and Omega 7 Comics are the founding members of ANIA. All agreed to come together as a strategic move to share marketing costs and leverage off of a combined capital base and talent pool.

"We have some of the most dynamic collection of artists and writers in the comic book industry," said Eric Griffin, President of ANIA and owner of Africa Rising Comics. "The time was right for unification. African Americans in all types of business are coming together. All of the members (of ANIA) realize that we can't afford to try and do it alone. Individually we can only touch several thousands of people. But, together we can reach into the millions. That's what it's all about. Giving our people an alternative."

ANIA has a strong message. They want everyone to hear it: We are Afro-centric and Proud of It.

"All of our members agree that we shouldn't soften our message," continues Griffin. "We will tell it like it is."

Afro-centric doesn't mean just painting a black face on a white character. Afro-centric means a whole new point of view as seen from the eyes of a black person.

"We have several new projects in development in each company within ANIA. Soon African Americans can have a choice that they didn't have before."

ANIA expects to sell 3 million comics in 1993.

A New Lease On Life

According to the USA Today, January 28th edition, DC has unveiled plans for a new Superman TV show on ABC. As yet uncast, the entitled *Lois & Clark: The New Adventures of Superman*, is an all-new, live-action super-series - the first to feature a mature Metropolis Marvel since the halcyon days of George Reeves. The series begins production in March and has been described as the "Moonlighting-type relationship, very '90s, very hip." Lorimar - a division of Time-Warner, who owns DC Comics - is producing, with both a pilot and at least six episodes for release next season.

"Hillside Strangler" Strikes Eclipse

Kenneth Bianchi - one of the two men convicted for the infamous "Hillside Strangler" sex murders, and one of the figures profiled in Eclipse Comics' *True Crime Trading Cards* - is suing the publisher for $6.75 million on the grounds that they used his name and likeness commercially without his consent.

Bianchi reportedly claims that Eclipse has diverted income from the cards which rightfully belongs to him, and that the publishers are distributing a product bearing his name, also without authorization.

Eclipse denies the latter allegation, and argues that their cards were entitled to report facts of public record. Editor-In-Chief Cat Yronwode - named as co-defendant with publisher Dean Mullaney and the artist who painted Bianchi's *True Crime* portrait - stated, "Bianchi is a public figure and as such is subject to news and reportage."

She added, "We consider it publishing in the public interest."

Eros Gets Positive Review

The *Voice Literary Supplement* of the current issue of New York City's *Village Voice* magazine includes a lengthy feature article on erotic comic books. Regular contributor Richard Gehr reviews fourteen comic titles, nine of which are published by Eros Comix. Quotes are included from Eros/Fantagraphics Publisher Gary Groth.

The article traces the origin of erotic comic books to the '30s era eight-pagers known as "Tijuana Bibles." Gehr suggests that "The Tijuana tradition does live on in Bob Fingerman's *Atomic Age Truck Stop Waitress*... but these Tijuana apocrypha are more about parody than getting readers off." Gehr goes on to explain, "The '60s undergrounds marked a transitional phase in erotic comics' discontinuous history..." describing Robert Crumb as "...one of the world's greatest sexist humorists." He cites the undergrounds as the inspiration for current titles such as *Omaha the Cat Dancer* and *Cherry*.

The Voice article credits Eros for ushering in a new era in erotic comics. "The Eros experiment proves that good artists create good porn. The best example of this is Gilbert Hernandez's jazzily titled *Birdland*," described as "unceasingly clever" and "sensually relentless." He also praise Mike McCarthy's *Bang Gang*, Craig Maynard's *Up From Bondage* and Bob Fingerman's *Skinheads in Love*.

Gary Groth is quoted as saying, "There is an aura of unrespectability around erotic comics I rather like."

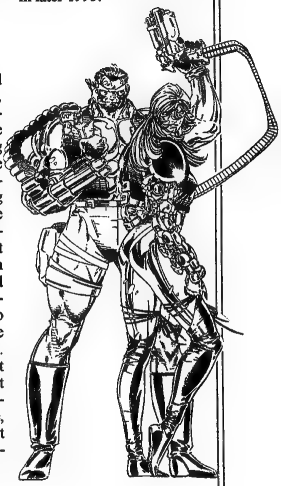
So, too, apparently, does the *Village Voice*. The *Voice Literary Supplement* is over-run by some 600,000 copies, and distributed free through major booksellers nationwide. Look for interest in Eros titles to subsequently climb, as comics stores are specifically cited as places to find this material.

A Rude Awakening

The Hollywood based hard rock band, Rude Awakening, has signed Kirby-Award winner Steve Rude to render the cover art for their upcoming album *Silent Cry* on Statue Records. The band is very excited about this as they are big comic fans. To commemorate such a feature, they will be making personal appearances at comic stores while on tour in 1993. Rude Awakening and their label will be making copies of the album available to retailers internationally who are interested in this collector's item. For information on the product or band appearances contact Lesa Arrey c/o Rude Awakening, 1973 Cheremoya Avenue, Hollywood, CA 90068 or at (213) 461-7172 or (310) 285-RUDE.

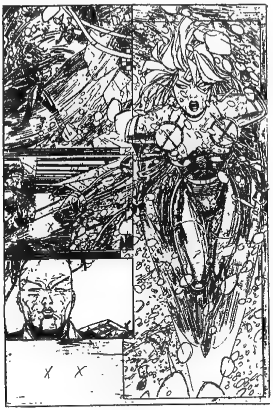
Wetworks Dries Out... For Now

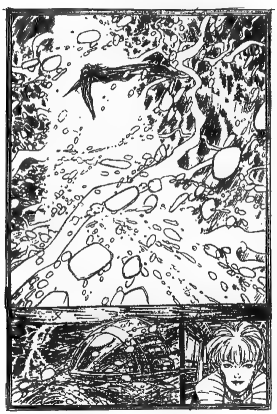
A recent Image Comics press release announced the postponement of Whilce Portacio's highly anticipated - and long overdue - *Wetworks* miniseries, explaining that the project was shelved because "Portacio has been away from the drawing board helping with a series of family emergencies." According to Jim Lee, "Whilce felt that re-soliciting the miniseries was the appropriate thing to do, given the circumstances. Before soliciting it again, we're going to wait and let Whilce get farther ahead with completed pages. Next time you see *Wetworks* advertised, you can be sure it will hit the racks on time." Consequently, all outstanding orders for the series have been cancelled pending a re-solicitation in later 1993.



PREVIEW

X-MEN UNLIMITED #1
Marvel Comics
by Lobdell, Bachalo & Panosian





A Conversation With ... Roger Stern

Interview by Jerry Smith

Roger Stern has written just about every Marvel and DC comic in existence over the last fifteen years. For the last few years, Roger has guided the destiny of Superman in *Action Comics*. Along with various other questions, we asked him how he felt to be one of the "assassins" of the Man of Steel:

Arena Magazine: What do you think of all the hype surrounding Superman right now, and who's idea was it to do the hatchet job?

Roger Stern: The actual death idea was Dan Jurgens [writer of *Superman*]. It was a couple of "Superman summits" ago. I should probably explain ... all the Superman writers and artists get together once or twice a year for a big meeting, to discuss what we're gonna be doing next. The next arc of stories, the major plots ... it's a big free-for-all. We throw ideas back and forth. All of the writers, pencillers, and inkers get into it. We've had our colorist at a couple of meetings, he's thrown in ideas ... Mike Carlin, and the assistant editor, in this case, Jennifer Franco, get together and play referee. Then we line one wall with a big sheet of butcher paper with the issue numbers and dates written down, and we say, "Okay, this issue I'm gonna do the villain story," or, over here, "Jimmy breaks his arm in this story, so make sure he has a cast on his arm in this story ... So we coordinate these things, throw out major story ideas, we all come up with two or three major ideas, throw them in the pot, see how they work. Two ideas Dan had come up in a previous summit, over a year ago now, was a big, major physical threat for Superman. We had a lot of guys who had mental powers, or guys in suits who had economic like Lex Luthor ...

AM: Right.

Stern: ... and [there were] sorcerers and things, but Superman hasn't had that many, even in the newer incarnation, big physical threats. We've had the Parasite, who's been a pretty good physical threat ... Doomsday is almost a force of nature; a big, huge, massive guy who went one on one with Superman. And the other idea we had was, "We'll do a death story."

One of the things we've done in the newer incarnation of Superman is, we've looked back into the previous incarnation and [thought], "What were the stories we liked that had the most effect on things?" Uh, we decided to bring back Braniac and Luthor, but we do a different spin on it this time. And, uh, Clark and Lois getting engaged, but this time it's not an imaginary story, it actually happens. We deal with the ramifications of it. It's a lot like that with the death of Superman. We could have done the death of Superman [and have it be] a fake or something, but we started talking and said, "No, no cop outs. If we're gonna kill him, we kill him. [Laughs] I think someone said as a joke, "What are we gonna have to do to get people to pay attention to Superman, kill him?"

AM: [Laughter]

Stern: So, the more we talked about it, the bigger and more dramatic the story became. [We decided] this was too good a story, we can't not do it. And, uh, Mike says, "I'm gonna have to check with management on this!"

AM: [Laughter]

Stern: "[Mike says] it's a great story but I really have to get approval ... "

AM: Superman's on too many lunchboxes ...

Stern: Yeah. It's one of these things that, aside from being a great character, Superman is, for good or ill, also a product that a major corporation owns. They might be opposed to just throwing him away, he's been a major breadwinner for them over fifty years. Of course, even killing Superman off, he'll still exist in reprints, the TV shows on Nick-at-Nite five nights a week, and the movies are still out there ... so on those alone they could probably keep rights to the name. I'm not sure of the exact legal ramifications of that, I'll let management worry about that.

AM: Obviously they're not going to kill Superman off forever. Can you talk about what's going to happen in the Superman titles after he dies?

Stern: After *Superman #75* we have two months of the "Funeral for a Friend" storyline. It's just the tip of the iceberg in dealing with the ramifications of Superman's death. In *Action* 685, which comes out after the death, I wrote a scene that's loosely based on an incident that I'm told happened in Dallas after the Kennedy assasination. There was an actual standoff in the corridors of Parkland hospital over custody of the body. There were Texas rangers who said, "The body has to stay here to perform an autopsy for a murder trial," and the Secret Service drew their service revolvers and said, "No, we're taking the body with us."

AM: One sticky problem I'm sure you had to deal with was, does Lois Lane tell anyone that Clark Kent is Superman?

Stern: Lois is in a terrible dilemma. She figures she can't

tell anyone that Superman and Clark were the same person because his parents are still alive. Superman has many enemies out there who would say, "I can't kill him, but I can get back at him by killing his parents!" So she's really in a triple dilemma. She can't tell anyone, but at the same time, all these people are coming up to her and saying, "Don't worry, we're sure Clark will turn up eventually." There are thousands of people missing in Metropolis because all of these buildings were torn down in the battle with Doomsday. People are missing, they're digging people out of the rubble all the time, some are alive, some are dead ... [People] are saying, "You can't give up hope, Clark will turn up." And she knows that he won't. But she can't tell anyone, and it's driving her crazy. Ma and Pa Kent can't take part in the funeral because no one knows ... they eventually come to Metropolis and talk to Lois and there's a settlement there. Lana [Lang] comes along because she knows, and she helps support both the Kents and Lois. It's tough on her as well; she can't tell anybody.

AM: Clark Kent or not, will there be another Superman character?

Stern: There will be four new characters. One of these came out of the last summit meeting. We said, "We're going to be out of work, we have to do something!" After Superman #77, all four books are discontinued.

AM: You're kidding.

Stern: We're doing a series of special one-shots, the first of which will be called The Legacy of Superman. It's a double sized book, we've got five stories in there of the other heroes in Metropolis trying to fill the void; Gangbuster, Guardian, Thorn, Sinbad, and a special story with Waverider [a time-traveling superhero] trying to answer the

question, "Can I bring Superman back?" The upshot is ... no. If you could, where do you stop? I'm sure NASA would love to have Albert Einstein on staff. Where do you stop? Pretty soon you'd have everyone who ever died alive again. You can't do it.

We're doing a one-shot Supergirl/Team Luthor special.

AM: That will be by yourself and Jackson Guice, I hope.

Stern: Actually, Kerry Gamill is doing the cover and June Brigman is doing the story. This is Luthor trying to fill the void. This is his chance to be number one man here, and it doesn't turn out like he planned. This sets the stage for the Supergirl miniseries, which will be out later in '93. Probably in the summer.

We're actually publishing an issue of *Newstime Magazine*, Metropolis' and the nation's leading news weekly, which will have an issue dealing with the death of Superman. After that, sometime in the spring, four super teams will be launching four new characters. Each will have a connection with the death of Superman. I'm not at liberty to reveal the details, we're still in the design stages of how they'll look at this point. They'll be four new characters. We'll try to maintain continuity amongst these titles like we did in the Superman books, obviously it won't be the same continuity because it will be four different characters instead of one character.

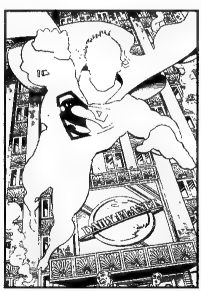
AM: So a comic with the masthead "Superman" will not be no longer be published after Superman is dead, for a while at least?

Stern: For a while at least. Who can say a year from now, or later, what will happen. Like I said, I'm not privy to what has to be done to maintain trademark and such, so I don't know.

AM: So you haven't planned that far ahead?

Stern: We've planned ... I can't remember how many months we've planned. It seems to me we've come up with about six months worth of storylines for our four new characters. We have a major storyline that involves all four characters. So there'll be a lot of stand-alone stories with continuity amongst all four titles, then a major storyline moving through the four titles.

(Continued Next Month)



Chaosium Releases

Adventures In Camelot

Arthur is High King, and an unprecedented time has come to Britain. There are fewer empty seats at the Round Table, and fewer enemy kings who challenge Arthur's right to rule. This is the high point of King Arthur's reign, a period known as the Age of Adventure.

The Spectre King, formerly titled *Honor & Glory*, is a book filled with six medium-length heroic adventures - The Tournament of Logres, the Abbey of La Beal, Background and Map of Cambridge, Adventure of the Ghost Knight and more - for use with Chaosium's *Pendragon* roleplaying game. Each adventure is constructed to be played individually, and each is packed with knightly thrills and glorious adventure.

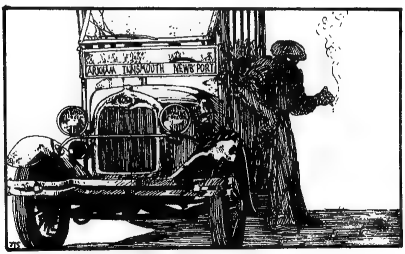
Pendragon is a game wherein you and your friends participate in valiant adventures with knight-characters - the heroes of the tale. You can face the same dangers that Arthur and Lancelot encountered, but this time you decide your knight's actions! Loads of fun and interest!

The Terrible Truth About Innsmouth

The trading town of Innsmouth once prospered on the north coast of Massachusetts. Early in the 19th century her great sailing ships traveled the world in search of trade and treasure.

A series of mishaps brought the town to the brink of financial ruin, but it was saved when captain Obed Marsh discovered a secret source of gold among the islands of the South Pacific. Prosperity returned to Innsmouth, but for only a short time. The gold held a price that now, nearly a century later, has left the town a decaying hulk, its diseased citizenry mere shambling parodies of what were once people. Shunned by its neighbors, Innsmouth slowly dies.

Escape from Innsmouth is based on H.P. Lovecraft's popular "The Shadow Over Innsmouth," a haunting tale of a nearly forgotten town cursed by a blasphemous pact. Featuring 160 pages, *Escape from Innsmouth* contains pertinent information about the town and its residents, maps of important locations, and two lengthy scenarios for use with the *Call Of Cthulu* roleplaying game.



Steve Jackson Games

Awful Green Computer Thingies

Steve Jackson Games and QQP Productions are happy to announce their agreement for a computerized version of the popular *Awful Green Things From Outer Space*.

QQP, creators of the best-selling games *The Perfect General* and *Solitaire's Journey*, will team up with ALF Engineering to convert Tom Wham's tongue-in-cheek boardgame to electronic platforms. The 1993 release will initially be available for MS-DOS, with other formats to follow.

This is Steve Jackson Games' first venture into computer gaming since the early '80s, when Origins Systems (now a division of Electronis Arts) released *Ogre* and *Autoduel*.

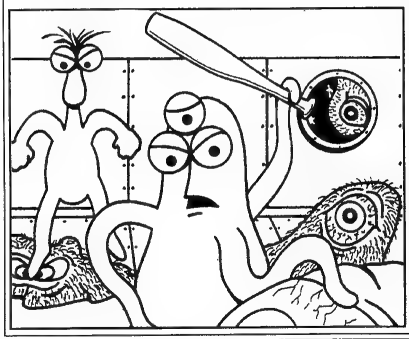
"QQP and ALF have some great ideas for keeping the 'silly' feel of the art and the game intact," commented Loyd Blankenship, SJ Games' Product Development Manager. "Tony Farmer at ALF has shown us some exciting preliminary work - we're looking forward to the finished product."

GURPS Supporting Cast

Character creation - when you're building a character to play, it's one of the most ejoyable parts of the game. When you're the GM trying to whip up the occupants of a bar, ten minutes before your players show up, it can be... hectic!

No longer, though! *GURPS Supporting Cast* provides over a hundred fully-developed NPCs ready to drop into a campaign. And we don't just concentrate on one genre - we give you everything from fantasy bouncers to far future space pirates.

Each character has all necessary advantages, disadvantages and skills, plus a fully developed background story, and advice on possible roles within the campaign. But that's not all - SJ Games also includes more than 20 partial adventures for use with the NPCs presented. This makes *Supporting Cast* incredibly useful to the GM who is strapped for time.



About That GEN CON...

Imagination. That's all it takes. A lot of imagination and a flair for fun.

Whether it be fighting the Iraquis in the deserts of Saudi Arabia, fending off evil knights in the medieval days of King Arthur, or battling the exploits of the comic book world of Dr. Doom, the choice is yours.

At the 26th annual GEN CON/ Origins Game Fair to be held in Milwaukee Thursday through Sunday, Aug. 19th through Aug. 22nd, many a fantasy will be fulfilled.

These players don't mess around. The doors will open at 8 a.m. and won't close until midnight, Thursday through Saturday. Sunday, activities wind down at 4 p.m. Dozens of games will be held throughout the fair, including Advanced Dungeons & Dragons game tournament, with proceeds benefiting the Children's Hospital of Wisconsin in Milwaukee.

The convention is sponsored by TSR Inc., the maker of a number of fantasy games as well as magazines, books and numerous other accessories. The company is located in Lake Geneva, WI, where the convention was held for several years and spawned the name GEN CON.

"This is the biggest site of its kind in the country," siad Thomas McLaughlin, public relations manager for TSR. "It's huge. We attreact people from all over the U.S., Europe and Canada." McLaughlin said young males make up the majority of the 20,000 visitors expected this year. "Probably 80% are male," he said. "A lot of the games are strategy games dealing with military warfare and such. Guys seem to gravitate to

Gaming News

White Wolf Crossover

The Cinderella story of '92, White Wolf, took the summer convention season by storm with *Vampire: The Masquerade*, followed by *Werewolf: The Apocalypse*. Now, they've combined these bestsellers into the first crossover: *Under A Blood Red Moon*. The Damned battle the Garou through the srtreets of Chicago in an epic battle no self-respecting gamer will want to miss!

it. A majority are in high school and college, although you'll see a lot of kids in junior high. And some are much older."

Some of the most popular games on the market today are the war games, which McLaughlin said also teaches players about history. "A lot of these guys are real history buffs," he said. "They really get into the military. They recreate battles with miniature figures, recreating exactly what happened, like dogfights, while learning history."

McLaughlin said the attraction of fantasy games was like any other fascination. "Some people have an affinity for baseball, knowing who played when for the last 25 years. It's just the same kind of attraction. They eat it up."

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Trading Card News

TOPPS TO PRODUCE STAR WARS GALAXY

PREMIUM TRADING CARD SET

Nearly 10 years after the last movie in the series concluded, the STAR WARS saga remains the most popular science fiction adventure ever.

This past year alone, two new Star Wars books have made the New York Times best-seller lists. A new series of adventures in comic book form was a critical and commercial smash. And interest in collectibles including toys and posters is booming. Items from *STAR WARS, THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK*, and are reaching new price levels.

Now, Topps has created an all new deluxe trading card set that to be one of the most sought after *STAR WARS* collectibles ever. Titled the *STAR WARS GALAXY*, the 140 card set provides an extraordinary homage to this timeless adventure.

"This is an elaborately conceived, first class project all the way," says Gary Gerani, editor of the set. Gerani, who developed 11 previous *STAR WARS* sets for Topps, says this "is the most original and breathtaking of the bunch."

The largest part of the set, with 60 subjects, is perhaps the most extraordinary. Each card in this subset, titled "New Visions of Star Wars", features a full color illustration by one of today's top comic book artists.

Some of the more than 50 creators who have contributed their unique visions to *STAR WARS GALAXY* include Al Williamson, Gil Kane, Sam Keith, Dale Keown, Dave Stevens, and Ken Steacy. In addition, Walt Simonson has etched-foil chase cards for the set.

"These artists have a real affinity for the *STAR WARS* saga. You can see it in the results," says Sean Taggart, project manager for the series.

The comic artists interpretations are just one part of *STAR WARS GALAXY*. Editor Gerani and creative consultant Stephen J. Sansweet, author of the recently published *STAR WARS: From concep,. to Screen, to Collectible*, have divided the remainder of the set into three main sections.

The first section provides an all new look at the main characters of the films, including Han Solo, Luke Skywalker, Princess Leia and Darth Vader.

The second section is the *Design of STAR WARS*, a visual chronicle of the creative development of the saga, including never before seen photos, sketches and rare production art-from the Lucas Film archives.

This is followed by the *Art of STAR WARS*, which features exotic poster concepts, greeting cards, books and an extraordinary plethora of rarely seen illustrations.

The 140 full-color cards serve as more than just an homage to the three *STAR WARS* films, say Gerani. Since 1997 has been announced for the next film, the *STAR WARS GALAXY*, "is also a delicious tease for the cinematic pleasure to come."

STAR WARS GALAXY, Series One, will be available in April, primarily through comic and card shops.

Comic Images News

A Cutting-Edge Connection

What do you get when you cross a leader in the comic trading card industry with an up-and-coming group of black comic book publishers? Perhaps one of the hottest card series of 1993 - the *ANIA Trading Card* series from Comic Images.

"We are very excited to be working with Comic Images," says Eric Griffin, President of ANIA. "Especially considering their reputation for producing superior quality cards over the past several years."

Hank Rose, co-owner and director of Comic Images, points out that the ANIA creators are no newcomers to the comic industry, either. "These guys have been developing and perfecting their characters and their books for years. Now is the perfect time to introduce them to the exciting world of trading cards."

30 Years of Magic

The first series, "From Tolkien to Robin Hood," took us on an artistic trek through the worlds of fantasy, literature, and drama. Now, experience *Hildebrant II*, a celebration of Hildebrant's 30 years in the realm of illustration. Greg's incredible sense of form, and his exquisite use of color to create scenes that range from the deepest macabre to the most luminous ethereal, come alive in this 90-card series which will include select pieces of Hildebrant's earliest work. As a bonus, look for 250 card personally autographed by Greg!

And to top it all off, six fabulous Chromium Cards are randomly packed within the series.

Some Stout Cards

Which famed comic artist has scaled Mt. Kilimanjaro, dived beneath the Antarctic ice, and lived in Yugoslavia, Italy, Spain, Mexico, Antarctic and the United States? And which prominent artist attracted more than two million visitors to the Smithsonian when his "dinosaur" illustrations were displayed there? It's the same comic artist and illustrator whose astonishing work is now being showcased in a 90-card series by Comic Images: *William Stout*! As a bonus, six Chromium Cards will be randomly packed within the series!

Kitchen Sink Cards

Charles Burns is one of the top comics artists/ illustrators working today. His art has appeared in *Raw!, Blab!, Death Rattle, Heavy Metal*, a recent *Time Magazine* cover, *Rolling Stone* and an Iggy Pop album cover. His lithographs, serigraphs and prints are extremely popular and his *Skin Deep* has just hit the market from Penguin Books, and his color comic *Blood Club* is coming soon from Kitchen Sink Press.

Most recently, his Dog Boy character is appearing weekly on MTV's *Liquid Television*.

Now, for the first time, a trading card set puts a spotlight on his top characters. Called *Goon Squad*, the full color set of 36 cards comes beautifully housed in an artfully detailed box designed by Burns himself.

But, that's not all! The backs of the cards together form the tortured being found on the cover of *Skin Deep*! Coming in March!

SkyBox News

X-Men Series II Trading Cards

SkyBox International is again teaming up with the Marvel Entertainment Group to produce a follow up second series to the fastest selling comic card line of 1992: *X-Men Trading Cards*. Prototypes and packaging for the new trading card set were unveiled at the SkyBox booth during the New York Comic Show.

X-Men Series II Trading Cards will include a 100-card set featuring the superheroes and super villains from the best selling franchise in the comic industry - X-Men from Marvel Comics - including characters from X-Men, The Uncanny X-Men, X-Force, X-Factor and Excalibur. In addition to the superhero, super villain, and team cards, new categories have been added including arch-enemies in a multi-card, puzzle format.

Each card will feature an original work of art created exclusively for the card line by Marvel's best known "X" artists, bursting through an all-new, bold border design. Card backs include additional artwork, a DNA Analysis of character's mutant powers and personal file notes form Professor X, the leader of the X-Men.

As a SkyBox first, three levels of bonus cards will be randomly inserted in a limited number of six-card *X-Men II* packs, including nine foil-stamped cards, three full-color holograms, and one special 3-D card. Look for it!

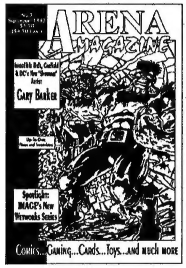
Milestone: The Dakota Universe Cards

SkyBox and DC Comics are conjoining to release its new Milestone: *The Dakota Universe Trading Cards* featuring characters from Milestone Media, the new line of multicultural comic books distributed by DC Comics.

The first card line to be produced from this new agreement will feature all the Warriors and supporting characters from the new Dakota Universe of characters to be introduced in four new Milestone comic book series - *Static, Hardware, Icon*, and *Blood Syndicate*. The trading card set will include 100 cards featuring all new, all original art created exclusively for this card line by the top Milestone artists.

Creative new border designs

BACK ISSUES BACK ISSUES



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featuring West African mudcloth patterns will highlight this artwork, and card backs will include biographical and other informative copy from the editors at Milestone Media critical to understanding the past, present and future of the Dakota Universe. The card line will also introduce a number of new characters who have not yet appeared in the comic books.

Disney's Aladdin Trading Cards

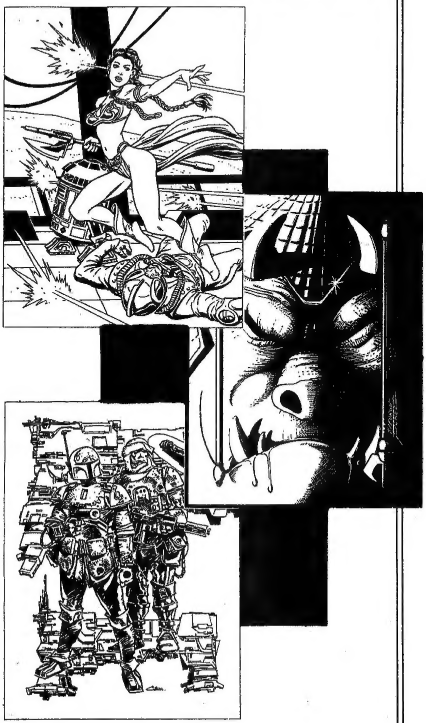
In a faraway land of sand and sun, they tell a tale of a magical lamp, a genie, an evil sorcerer, a princess, and a poor street boy whose destinies meet 'neath the stars on an Arabian night... So begins the tale of *Aladdin*, Disney's latest and greatest animated motion picture.

And now, SkyBox International is proud to announce its newest card series, *Disney's Aladdin Collector Cards*.

In recent years, the success of Disney's animated feature films has risen to unprecedented heights, culminating with the Academy Award nomination for 1991's *Beauty and the Beast*. And this success at the box office has also meant success for merchandising and licensed products! The continued market support for toys, games, theme parks and other licensed products means that *Aladdin Collector Cards* will continue to be popular for a very long time after their initial release!

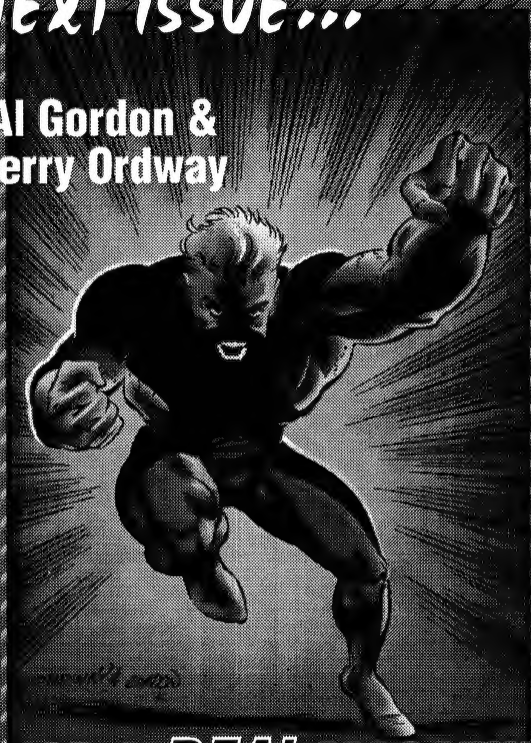
Topps Introduces Star Wars Trading Cards

Here's a sample of some of the *Star Wars Galaxy Trading Cards* to be released by Topps. Cards were illustrated by a variety of artists including George Perez, Walter Simonson, Sam Kieth, Dale Keown, Mark Nelson, Cam Kennedy, Mike Mignola, Dave Dorman, Joe Quesada, Brian Stelfreeze, Howard Chaykin, Kieth Giffen, Moebius, Gil Kane, Bill Sienkiewicz, Jim Valentino, Geoff Darrow and more! Don't miss out!



NEXT ISSUE...

Al Gordon & Jerry Ordway



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